THE
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PATRIOTISM OF PROTEST

THE CONSENSUS MARCHERS

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Psychic Star of the Year

DANIEL COHEN

WRITERS ON VACATION

Roland Barthes

Reviews of the New Fiction

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LETTERS

Author's postscript

Paris, France

Dear Sirs: Three developments have occurred since I sent you my article on the political situation in France following de Gaulle's announcement of his intention to stand for re-election [*The Nation,* Nov. 29].

1. The rival candidates have had more extensive use of radio and TV than in any previous campaign. This has given the race a liveliness that is unusual under the Fifth Republic.

2. When I wrote, Lecanuet's candidacy had just been announced and little was known about him. Since then he has made quite a hit on TV, and has been particularly effective with his "Europeanism." He may get far more Right and Center votes than seemed likely two weeks ago.

3. De Gaulle, largely as a result of Lecanuet's speeches, has become aware of the strong feelings on the Europe issue and, through his ministers, is taking a much less stiff-necked attitude on the Common Market. He pointedly talked with Heath, the British Conservative leader, for more than an hour, the implication being that he would welcome Britain's entry into the Common Market on that non-supranational basis which the British also prefer.

I indicated that it was possible de Gaulle would not win re-election in the first round. The likelihood of a run-off election now seems even more probable.

Alexander Werth

Basis of competence

East Lansing, Mich.

Dear Sirs: I compliment you for inviting Samuel Adams Darcy to review *Marxism* and *Strange Communists I Have Known* [*The Nation,* Nov. 8]. It is a very good review, and your choice of the reviewer is a courageous contribution to the development of an atmosphere in which literary contributors can be chosen on the basis of competence.

Charles P. Larrowe
Professor of Economics
Michigan State University

Some quotes

Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Sirs: In an interview on his 75th birthday, Dwight D. Eisenhower expressed his dismay about the demonstrations against the war in Vietnam and said: "You know, I've even got so I *hate* the word 'intelligentsia.'"

On a previous occasion Eisenhower said: "I *hate* war as only a soldier who has lived it can, only as one who has seen its brutality, its futility, its stupidity."

A contemporary of Eisenhower, Albert Einstein, had this to say on intelligentsia and on hate: "The 'intellectuals' . . . have . . . a particularly strong influence on the formation of public opinion. . . . Those who are about to lead us toward an authoritarian government are particularly concerned with intimidating and muzzling that group.

"Arrows of hate have been shot at me, too: but they never hit me, because somehow they belonged to another world, with which I have no connection whatsoever."

Bartlett Q. Seldes

More saint than schnook

Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sirs: Jack Newfield's insights into SDS ["Idealism and Action"; *The Nation,* Nov. 8] are marred by a number of errors, most of them minor but a few of importance.

(1) I must confess that I am not now, and have not been for six months, an SDS staff member, though I do put a lot of time into the organization.

(2) True, Jeff Shero and I were harassed by Chicago cops in October, but Jeff was not ticketed and my ticket, though unjust, was a shadow case. That the national office has been under surveillance is beyond doubt . . . but it makes little sense for us or for Newfield to over-dramatize the pettier annoyances when the society has so many subtler and more powerful devices at its command.

(3) Newfield is guilty of big-city chauvinism when he writes that "Those members on small, rural campuses in Kansas and Oklahoma are only vaguely liberal and probably unable to distinguish between a Sparticist and a narcissist." There are many of those, of course, as there are in the cities; but I've been more struck by the sophistication and depth of SDS people from such places. Their radicalism has Populist roots and an integrity of its own. . . . By the way, what *is* the difference between a Sparticist and a narcissist?

(4) There is a reference, presumably from someone in the SDS office, to "poor schnooks who burn draft cards." I don't think this remark reflects general opinion in the organization, certainly not among the "leadership." Rather, I think most of us would say that the decision to burn the prized piece of paper is a tactical one, one of many possibilities, probably not the most effective in most circumstances but maybe more so in some. . . . We certainly have no respect for the piece of paper, and we think the burners are more saints than schnooks.

Todd Gitlin

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More Escalation

Returning from Vietnam, Secretary McNamara declared at his airport press conference that we are no longer losing the war in that unhappy country. Perhaps remembering his earlier forecast that we could start pulling out our troops at the end of 1965, he avoided predictions of victory in the foreseeable future. He spoke only of the increasing infiltration of forces from North Vietnam and promised a further build-up of American ground action and aerial bombing. We now have about 170,000 men in Vietnam. Newspaper estimates run to a doubling of that number during 1966, but that projected force, if one relies on the usual premise that a ratio of 10 to 1 is required to extinguish a guerrilla insurrection, will still be far from adequate. As for bombing, Joseph Alsop, the dean of the bellicose commentators and possessor of good sources of information, writes that a monthly drop of 10,000 tons is to be raised to a "vertiginous" average of 40,000 tons, calculated to make the jungle and swamp retreats of the enemy "absolutely untenable." And to wipe out a few hundred more villages inhabited by the South Vietnamese peasants, whose freedom is so precious to us.

These plans are bad news for the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese, as is the dispatch to Vietnamese waters of two exceptionally powerful vessels, both nuclear-powered—the aircraft carrier *Enterprise* and the missile-launching cruiser *Bainbridge*. It is also bad news for the American people, who must pay the cost, both in lives and money, of what General de Gaulle calls "this absurd war." An apparently automatic process, irreversible as death, is under way. The protests of a sensible minority are heard, and instantly thrust aside. The lessons of the past are remembered—and ignored. The majority of the people are apathetic, much as their forebears were when whole populations were wiped out by the Black Death. And so the other minority—the shouters for victory, cost what it may—provide a semblance of national unity for the Johnson Administration's purposes.

The Administration, however, may in the course of the coming year find itself among the recipients of bad news. The war which it has extended so far beyond its earlier bounds is not popular. Normally, war brings with it a release from the routine of life, and the exhilaration that comes from participation in great events. The ecstasy of patriotism compensates to some extent for the deprivations and bloodshed. Not this time. In this conflict there is nothing of the steely resolution to which Churchill summoned the people of Britain when German invasion seemed imminent, none of the righteous anger which Pearl Harbor provoked among the American people. All but the most thoughtless find more to disgust than to edify in what the United States is doing in Southeast Asia, and those intellectuals who support the Administration's policy are doing little more than regurgitate the anti-Communist slogans of the fifties. In our previous wars, some have stood aside on grounds of conscience, but in what other war waged by the United States have Americans, however in the minority, offered active resistance or wished for a victory by the other side?

Mr. Johnson gambled on quickly subduing the Vietcong and their allies by bringing the latest military technology into play. That gamble he has already lost. There may still be some sort of negotiated settlement before next year's elections. If there is not, Richard Nixon is quite right: the failure to win will become a major election issue, and the outcome at the polls may not bear out Mr. Johnson's reputation for political acumen.

The Duty of Congress

Frustration is the spur to invention. A case in point is the recent innovation by Representatives Robert Kastenmeier of Wisconsin; Benjamin Rosenthal, William F. Ryan and Joseph V. Resnick of New York; William Broomfield (a Republican) and Charles G. Diggs of Michigan, and a few other members of Congress. Instead of bemoaning the failure of the majority in both houses of Congress to meet their responsibilities by debating the issues of the war in Vietnam, these legislators took steps to fill the vacuum. They organized public discussions of these issues in their own districts. Of course, such hearings are in no way a substitute for Congressional action, but neither are they a mere stopgap. They could become a valuable supplement to the legislative process and a channel for closer communication between Congressmen and their constituents. Of greater immediate inportance, they can help to force debate in Congress where the members, fearful that any questioning of the Administration's Asian policy might damage their own political fortunes, have acquiesced in a conspiracy of silence.

Mr. Kastenmeier has published a 160-page paperback, *Vietnam Hearings—Voices from the Grass Roots* ($1.50 from Representative Kastenmeier's office), which is a record of the proceedings in Madison, Wis., over which he presided. A broad spectrum of opinion found expression. Among individuals and organizations participating were the University of Wisconsin Student-Faculty Committee to End War in Vietnam; Young Americans for Freedom; Prof. William Appleman Williams; Reserve Officers Association of the U.S.; Wisconsin Scientists, Engineers and Physicians for Johnson and Humphrey; Military Order of the World Wars; American Legion; Madison DuBois Club; and many others. Perhaps Professor Williams said what most needed saying when, in countering the argument that, right or wrong, we are committed and must see it through, he termed such counsel part of

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a broader pattern of self-deception. Human beings are prone, when a major mistake has been made, to lie to themselves. Williams suggested that it is long past time that we renounce our self-deceptive lies about Vietnam.

Of course those most prone to this weakness are the least likely to know it, and we may assume that few opinions were changed at Madison or elsewhere. But there is another reason for the deepening rift between the pro-war or apathetic majority and the disaffected minority: the main positions are too far apart, morally and politically, to be reconciled. The pro-war view reflects the Administration stand that the conflict in Vietnam is not a civil war but an attack by the Communists of North Vietnam and China on the freedom-loving people of South Vietnam, and that American solicitude for these victims, as well as our own national interest, requires fighting with all our resources until the aggressors are forced to their just punishment at the negotiating table. The anti-war conviction is that the United States is carrying on the latest of a series of counterrevolutionary operations, in a crusade not only against communism but against all movements for economic and political liberation.

The split along this fission line is probably the most serious and portentous since the Civil War, and its outcome will affect the whole future direction of American democracy. Convinced that democracy cannot survive a continuation of the cold war at its present pitch of virulence, the anti-war party must and will persist in its opposition. Yet this course is fraught with danger alike for its members and the freedoms they cherish. Although the Administration and some of its allies declare their support of the right of dissent, this tolerance is not likely to survive the strains of a prolonged war in Asia. The identification of dissent with treason is the normal reaction to the exacerbations of such a conflict, and signs of its approach were not lacking in the right-wing speeches at Madison. Thus the meetings sounded a warning of approaching internal conflict, and emphasized the need, in simple prudence, for full-dress hearings on Vietnam when the second session of the 89th Congress convenes.

Nuclear Weapons for Germany

November was the month of revelations. First came Eric Sevareid's disclosure, not novel to newsmen, that a 1964 North Vietnam offer to talk peace had been rejected because Secretary Rusk's antennae were insufficiently activated. Then we were informed that with all the debate about sharing nuclear weapons with our NATO allies, unpublicized sharing has been in effect since 1958. In 1960, after an inspection trip to Europe, a subcommittee of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, in a still top-secret report to incoming President Kennedy, pointed up the "inadequate" custody being exercised over the weapons and recommended "tighter" physical and electronic controls (John W. Finney, *The New York Times*, November 28). At the same time, Secretary McNamara (whose peregrinations are always bad news for the American people and usually for the countries he visits) revealed in Paris that more than 5,000 U.S. nuclear warheads are currently stored on European soil in support of NATO forces, in addition to an arsenal of more than 5,000 nuclear weapons of the U.S. Strategic Forces. Yet this total in excess of 10,000—which does not include a probably far greater number of non-nuclear warheads and bombs in various parts of the world—is not accounted adequate for the defense of Europe, and Mr. McNamara promised a 20 per cent increase in the NATO nuclear arsenal within the next six months.

A feeble effort was made to assure apprehensive Americans that "permissive action links" could be relied on to prevent unauthorized use of the nuclear weapons assigned to NATO forces. We are told that German F-104 fighter-bombers armed with U.S. nuclear warheads sit on a ramp behind a barricade which can be lowered only at American command. Armed American sentries stand by to see that the German pilots cannot enter their cockpits without American permission. Finally, an electronic signal from an American command post is required to arm the warheads. The Joint Congressional Committee concedes that these controls are not "foolproof," but in its opinion they are about as tight as the present state of technology can devise.

On the basis of this necessarily vague description, and the fantastic proliferation of nuclear devices, the explosion of one or more can be confidently predicted. It takes only a modicum of military and technical understanding to show that the "permissive action links" are aptly named—they are more permissive than prohibitive. The sum of the physical precautions is obviously ineffective against conspiracy, with or without the use of force. For instance, a group of neo-Nazi plotters could demolish the barricade and overpower the sentries, or agreeable arrangements to the same end might be worked out between Germans and American sympathizers. American connivance might not be necessary, since the Germans fly the F-104s in maneuvers, but neither can it be ruled out. It will be recalled that soon after the Russians acquired nuclear weapons, a USAF general offered in a public speech to bomb the Soviet "atom nests" and declared that when Christ heard his defense He would absolve and reward him. Such mentalities are capable of actions scarcely conceivable to rational minds.

But what about the electronic safeguard? It is likewise vulnerable to conspiratorial action, and German-American arrangements to circumvent the physical safeguards could include transmitting the signal which arms the warheads. But the guardians could remain loyal and the signal could be transmitted from another source, the code having previously been broken by one of a number of possible methods—spying, cryptography, inspection of the receiving device, or other. Or the signal might be rendered unnecessary, the arming devices having been internally by-passed or modified for manual operation. The only defense is that no one should try to do it, and that is no defense at

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all. If they are given the problem, German electronics engineers can solve it; since the 19th century, they have been second to none in the world. Since World War II, thousands of engineer-years have been expended in a seesaw between radar measures and countermeasures—all classified secret, and all known to a multitude of technicians.

Mr. Finney quotes members of the committee as asking plaintively: What more does Germany want, anyway? What they want is to "participate" in weapons systems capable of hitting the medium-range ballistic missiles zeroed in on the cities and military installations of West Germany. "Participation" in surface ships armed with Polaris missiles might satisfy them—for the time being. But when it comes to weapons, the Germans are never satisfied for long. With participation culminating in control, nuclear weapons might give them the victory which eluded them in 1918 and 1945.

The Worst Censorship

It is inherent in the nature of democracy that the people themselves can emasculate or destroy it. The people themselves can interfere with the right of minorities "peaceably to assemble and petition the government for a redress of grievances"; they can frustrate the right of individuals and corporations to engage in trade with Communist states, though that trade may be sanctioned by government policy; they can mete out private punishment for personal beliefs and acts of conscience which run counter to current political frenzies. Abuses of this kind are not new; they were born with the Republic and the problem was foreseen by the founding fathers. But two World Wars have increased the danger, and the endless cold war, one of whose pretexts is that democracy is menaced from abroad, actually threatens it at home.

Thus the breakdown of official law and order in sections of the South, where the anti-Communist slogans of the cold war are a staple of racism, is paralleled by individual and organizational infringements affecting all races and breaking out in all parts of the country. Under color of the right of the individual to do as he will with his property, meeting places are refused to dissenters; even more ironical, insurance contracts have been canceled on the ground that the houses of dissenters are particularly subject to arson and vandalism. Under color of the individual's right to work or not to work, longshoremen, organized in the most corrupt unions in the country, refuse to load and unload ships—and that on moral and religious grounds. They submit to the leadership of notorious gangsters, but handling a cargo consigned to or from the Soviet Union or Poland is an intolerable offense to their honor.

In an extension of this intermittent crusading spirit, some bus drivers balked at transporting passengers to the November 27 SANE anti-war demonstration in Washington. According to Homer Bigart, writing in *The New York Times* (November 27), the New Jersey Conference of Amalgamated Transit Union forced the cancellation of agreements between SANE and three major bus companies, on the ground that the drivers are war veterans who "feel that what these people are doing is giving aid and comfort to the enemy." In some cases car pools had to be hurriedly organized when the drivers drove away in their empty buses on learning that the passengers were not going to a football game.

SANE filed complaints with the Interstate Commerce Commission and the National Labor Relations Board, charging a conspiracy in restraint of interstate trade. Although this action involves a diversion of SANE's scanty resources, it should be followed up and assistance should be forthcoming from public-spirited organizations and individuals. If the bus drivers can refuse service because the political views of riders do not conform with their own, why should not "patriotic" telegraph operators decline to transmit messages of protest against the war, or printers refuse to set type because the content of a book, article or editorial is not to their liking? This discrimination is used by political illiterates (to put the most charitable construction on their actions) to deprive American citizens of the rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

The misbehavior of the drivers did not go entirely unchallenged within the industry. John Gallagher, the proprietor of the Community Bus Company of Allwood, New Jersey, told Homer Bigart he was "very distressed" when his drivers, who belong to the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, refused to operate five buses that were to have transported demonstrators to Washington from the New York University campus in the Bronx. Mr. Gallagher stressed that neither he nor his family are pacifists. He simply felt that a bus company ought to transport anybody anywhere, regardless of race, color or creed. "We don't ask our passengers why they are going someplace," he said. "We are there to serve. We rode the Freedom March and others, some we didn't like."

Mr. Gallagher understands democracy. His drivers don't.

The Art Wagon

The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, whose three-building new premises were dedicated last March, has lost its director under circumstances that have attracted national attention and that make the future contribution of this ambitious new repository problematical. Briefly, Dr. Richard Brown did not please the institution's board of trustees and his resignation was requested. He could not be fired out of hand, because the County Museum is a state facility and the director is a civil servant; but neither could he stay in the face of implacable trustee hostility, because the museum is one of those public facilities that depend heavily on private support. The trustees, men of wealth, made clear that they understood the leverage of money.

Dr. Brown had become offensive, in particular, to

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one of the most affluent of the patrons: Howard Ahmanson, owner of the Home Savings and Loan Association (the world's largest). The director had declined to name the new museum complex for Ahmanson, had refused to employ Mr. Ahmanson's pet architect (a man noted for gold-leaf bank façades) as its designer and (perhaps the most painful blow) could not bring himself to hang in the museum Mr. Ahmanson's collection of dubious old masters.

The official complaint made of Dr. Brown is that he lacks administrative ability, but despite the wide discussion of the issue no specific instances of his shortcomings have been made public. Further, Dr. Brown has left Los Angeles to accept the directorship of the new Kimball Art Foundation, now under construction in Fort Worth, so his deficiencies are apparently not thought crippling in museum circles. It might be added that if an administrator was needed in Los Angeles they are much easier to find than art directors, and Dr. Brown never suggested that he would resist the addition of such a man to his staff—though he did, quite understandably, refuse to accept a business manager who would report directly to the trustees.

In a sense, Dr. Brown—and more seriously the people of Los Angeles—are victims of the culture "explosion." Culture has become "big league," "big money," a bandwagon phenomenon. And men who have prospered by grabbing front seats on bandwagons are jumping aboard the art wagon. The Los Angeles unpleasantness is only the most acute and widely publicized of situations that exist today in many of the country's museums and related halls of culture. There is no easy answer to the conflict of money with taste, power with knowledge, manipulation with professional integrity. One can only hope that as America becomes accustomed to the idea that it is possessed of culture as well as know-how, men of wealth will learn to support creative excellence without assuming that they can buy it. It is men like Dr. Brown who will teach them—and the trustees in Los Angeles will learn their first lesson when they try to find a man of his caliber to replace him.

LBJ and the Negro Vote

Case of the Missing Registrars

William Leon Higgs

Time is running out down South and the Johnson Administration seems oblivious of the deadline.

It is all too easy to assume that the right to vote means an automatic participation in government. With the Voting Rights Act now law, the Negro will have his full citizenship—so the theory goes. But look at the facts: In the Senate of the United States nine of the sixteen standing committees are chaired by Southerners. These chairmanships are the bedrock of the South's historical hegemony in the upper body of the Congress. Of these nine committee chairmen, six will be running for re-election in 1966; only three will face the electorate in 1968. Election is for six years.

The message is clear: The South's racist-oriented power base must be broken in 1966, or extended until 1972. The nation as a whole has a vital interest in the fate of the Southern bloc in Congress; its power is not illusory — it really exists. American foreign policy provides a good example. Richard Russell of Georgia is chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee with jurisdiction over the nation's military establishment. Mendel Rivers of South Carolina is Russell's counterpart on the House side. Otto Passman of Louisiana chairs the powerful foreign aid subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee and (until LBJ put the heat on) wielded a heavy ax on foreign-aid budgets. Passman's Louisiana colleague, Edward Hebert, is the third-ranking Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee; and John Sparkman of Alabama is vice chairman of the historically decisive Senate Foreign Relations Committee (behind fellow Southerner William Fulbright of Arkansas). These men have in common huge unregistered Negro constituencies.

The roll call of the '66 Senators and the chairmanships they hold is revealing. In addition to Russell, John McClellan of Arkansas presides over the Government Operations Committee; Allen Ellender of Louisiana, over the Agriculture Committee; Everett Jordan of North Carolina, the Rules Committee; Willis Robertson of Virginia, the Banking and Currency Committee; and—deserving special emphasis—James O. Eastland of Mississippi is in the chair of the Judiciary Committee.

The three '68 chairmen — Fulbright; Lister Hill of Alabama, Labor and Public Welfare; Russell Long of Louisiana, chairman-prospective of the Senate Finance Committee—all belong to a more moderate breed of Southern politician.

Viewed as a whole—and not in terms of seniority influence — the Senate yields a similar picture. Of twenty-two Southern Senators, twelve must run again in 1966. (This includes three special elections.) Eight seats are in the '68 class and five in the '70 class.

In the House of Representatives, the entire membership is elected every two years, and the Southern Representatives are less insulated from the new Southern Negro voter. But even here a failure to have effective Negro partici-

William Leon Higgs, who was the first attorney for James Meredith, was the only white lawyer in Mississippi representing Negroes in civil rights cases when he left that state (under pressure) in 1963. He now lives in Washington. Mr. Higgs has appeared for the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, SNCC, and has been a consultant with CORE, SDS and other groups.

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pation in the 1966 elections will mean a delay until 1968. Two years is an eternity to the leaping aspirations of the Southern civil rights movement.

And time is even shorter than the polling calendar would suggest. In the South, the Democratic primaries are normally the decisive contests. In most cases, they occur several months before the November general elections. The Alabama and Florida primaries will be held on May 3, 1966; and the "average" for the nine primary dates works out somewhere in June. This cuts the deadline for achieving a meaningful impact of the Voting Rights Act to about six months from the present time, and even that is generous.

Voters don't just vote for unknowns; they cast a ballot for candidates. And a candidate must qualify in order to get on the primary ballot. In Dixie, the cutoff date is typically one to two months before Election Day. For the potential candidate, and thus for the would-be Negro voter, the countdown in the Southern primaries has now dropped to a mere four or five months. Moreover, it takes time to plan a successful political campaign, to finance it, and sound out the support.

The opportunities for change are now evident. Already some hot primary battles are shaping up. It looks as though Governor Carl Sanders will run against Senator Russell in Georgia, former Democratic National Committeeman Camille Gravel against Senator Ellender in Louisiana, and Senator Sparkman against Governor Wallace or Republican Rep. James Martin in Alabama. A continued supply of substantial 1966 challengers to the Southern barons in the Congress will be directly tied to the Negro registration in the next few months.

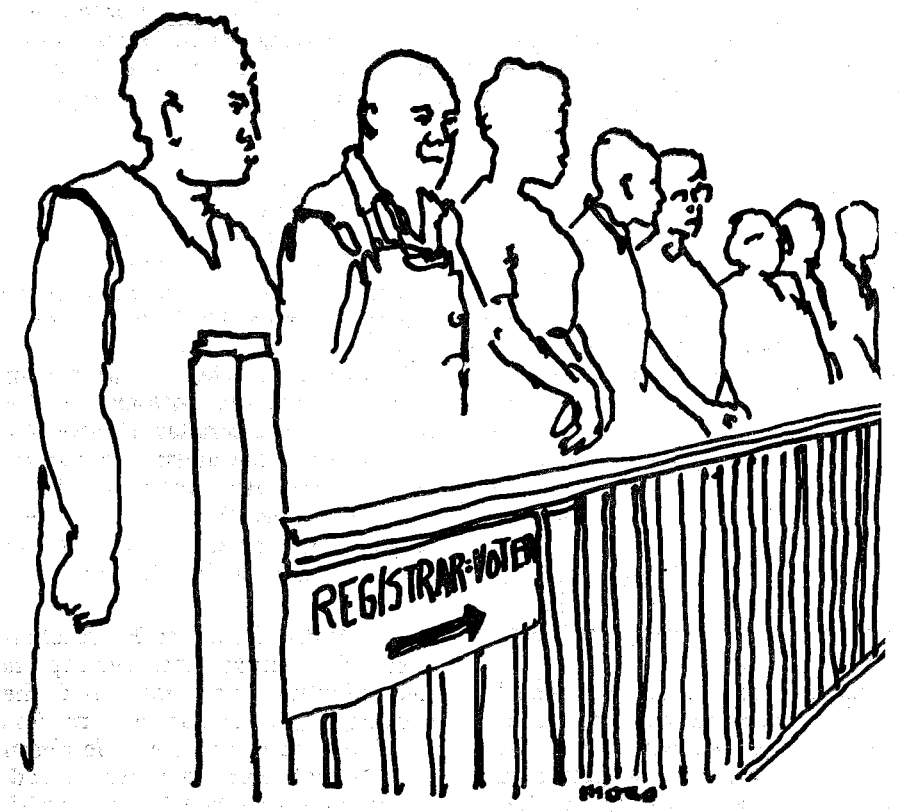
A related development waits in the wings. The defeat of the Congressional challenge of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party on September 17 may be only a prelude to a score or more such challenges in both Houses of the Congress after the 1966 elections. Prolonged failure of the Administration to enforce the Voting Rights Act could create a real donnybrook as violations of the act mushroom. A big slice of national power may well be at issue, including Eastland's Senate Judiciary chairmanship, Russell's Senate Armed Services chairmanship and Mendel Rivers' House Armed Services chairmanship.

The important state and local elections are an indispensable part of the picture. Alabama's primary elections for state and local offices will be held on the same day as the Congressional primary. Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia also schedule important state or local elections in 1966. Better education, justice, jobs and much else are riding on the election fortunes of governors, sheriffs, mayors, judges and school boards.

The Administration's stingy deployment of federal registrars is aggravating franchise enforcement problems. The civil remedies of the Voting Rights Act are largely dependent upon the presence of the registrars. An instance is the act's most potent compliance measure—denying certification to the election results. The remedy does not apply at all if the registrars have not been present in advance in the political subdivision. Criminal penalties will probably be of little or no value. Judging by a solid past record, the Justice Department won't even bother to prosecute.

It follows from all this that much of the meaning of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 will be lost for as long as six years unless pervasive use of the act is made before early spring of 1966. Enforcing the act has proved to be a surprisingly taxing assignment for the Administration. It can send troops half way around the world "to bring democracy" to Vietnam, but is apparently baffled by the logistics of dispatching federal registrars a few hundred miles to achieve the domestic variety of self-rule. Only the strongest of pressures from the civil rights movement have been able to shake loose the pitifully few federal registrars now in thirty-two Southern counties.

What's the problem? No one seems to know for sure, but the few suggested answers are not very flattering to Mr. Johnson and his Attorney General. A columnist syndicated in Mississippi recently characterized as "a closely guarded secret" an understanding between the Administration and Senator Eastland to station only a token number of federal registrars in Mississippi. Many civil rights people believe that similar unrecorded pacts exist throughout the six states and thirty-four North Carolina counties covered by the act — principally with the Senators from those states. Any



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such possible agreements aside, it is undeniable that the power of the President to send or to withhold federal registrars from a Southern Senator's or Congressman's district is a formidable political weapon. And it is similarly obvious that if the law were impartially enforced this leverage would be lost.

In October, the Administration withdrew the federal registrars in Bolivar County, Miss., a day or two after they had opened their doors for business. Bolivar County is the "backdoor" to Senator Eastland's plantation and, like his home county of Sunflower, has one of the heaviest Negro populations in Mississippi, almost none of whom are registered to vote.

Presidential civil rights activity —of a diversionary nature—has not been lacking. Two months ago the Administration announced that Negro attorney Wiley Branton of Pine Bluff, Ark., would be transferred to the Justice Department to oversee Voting Rights Act developments. Branton had been the director of Vice President Humphrey's Council on Equal Opportunity that does the top-level coordinating of federal civil rights programs. Widely interpreted as a Johnson rebuff to Katzenbach's methodical reluctance to employ federal registrars, the Branton appointment has produced little change. The Attorney General continues to tout the "voluntary compliance" of local Southern registrars.

With much fanfare the "planning session" for a spring White House Conference on Equal Opportunity was held November 17-18 at the new Washington Hilton. The closed meeting roundly condemned the Administration's refusal to use significant numbers of federal registrars and demanded immediate action in voting and all other fields. Hubert Humphrey was the principal speaker and encountered some of the heaviest flak of his illustrious career. Many of the 200 delegates were openly disgusted by the idea of "planning" for a spring conference when anyone but a fool knew what had to be done right away.

The Administration itself isn't the only brake on Mr. Johnson's use of the Voting Rights Act. The Democratic Party and the Democratical National Committee are playing roles in the molasses-slow "crusade." Acting under authority of the 1964 Atlantic City convention resolution which ordered desegregation of the Southern branch of the party by the time of the 1968 conclave, the National Committee's Equal Rights Subcommittee asked for advice from civil rights organizations and others directly interested. At a hearing held in Washington's Mayflower Hotel on October 6, Clarence Mitchell of the NAACP led a parade of frustrated witnesses. Two themes dominated the testimony: Give us more federal registrars and desegregate the Democratic Party *now*. Resourcefully, Chairmen David Lawrence of the subcommittee and John Bailey of the National Committee pointed out that federal registrars were the responsibility of Attorney General Katzenbach. Shifting gears, the two chairmen then sympathetically disclaimed any National Committee authority to desegregate the Southern wing of the party prior to issuing the call for the 1968 convention. This same committee in 1948 had found ample authority to throw out the rebel Mississippi Dixiecrats and to recognize the Mississippi loyalists.

Former Governor Lawrence (of Pennsylvania) seemed unable to comprehend the urgent message that Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party Chairman Lawrence Guyot was trying to get across to him: Lily-white Democratic Party officials were preparing to conduct the 1966 Democratic primaries in the South, and the National Committee must act immediately to insure Negro participation. Lawrence's Delphic reply to Guyot was, "If you've got the votes, you'll win the election."

When the Voting Rights Act was being considered, most members of the Congress believed that federal registrars would start moving into almost every county in Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana as soon as the President signed the act. Attorney General Katzenbach had told the House Judiciary Committee that any county which did not comply with the law would find itself playing host to federal registrars. Chairman John Macy of the Civil Service Commission assured the committee that, if necessary, even house-to-house registration would be used by the federal registrars. But the only Republican committee member, John Lindsay, had strong (and it now appears justified) doubts that the Attorney General could be trusted to enforce the act; he asked for specific, mandatory language to replace the discretionary provisions.

The House Judiciary Committee has by now become so disturbed by the flaccid implementation of the Voting Rights Act and its predecessor, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, that its chairman, Emanuel Celler, has appointed a three-man advisory subcommittee to investigate and report to the full committee in January on the need for a full-scale probe into the enforcement of federal civil rights legislation.

The chairman drafted three young, hard-working, independent legislators for the special group: Robert Kastenmeier (chairman, D., Wis.); James Corman of Los Angeles (D.); and Charles Mathias (R., Md.) of Montgomery County. Working at a brisk pace, the three have already interviewed top administrators and civil rights representatives. Their report could be explosive.

Three months after the act has become law federal registrars are on the scene in only thirty-two of the 600-plus election districts of the six states and thirty-four North Carolina counties reached by the act. Alabama has ten; Louisiana, five; Mississippi, fifteen; and South Carolina, two. Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia have none. Complaints by the hundreds have been pouring into the Justice Department. By the Attorney General's own figures in his October speech to the Washington Press Club, about 110,000 Negroes had by then registered in the more than 400 districts without registrars, and 53,500 in the nineteen counties where federal registrars were present. (Thirteen additional counties received registrars shortly after the Attorney General's speech, bringing the total to the present thirty-two.) In other words, federal registrars are, on the average, enrolling ten times as many voters as the local officials. Unless the President dispatches his plentiful supply of federal agents, free Negro voting in the South could still be years away. And, unless he sends these registrars at once, the election opportunities of '66 will vanish.

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Patriotism of Protest

The Consensus Marchers . . . . Robert G. Sherrill

Washington, D.C.

That many bodies packed into that limited an area steams with its own primordial message, and it may be the only message that gets through to President Lyndon Johnson from the March on Washington for Peace in Vietnam. Just how many marchers were there, clotting the sidewalks around the White House on November 27, is a matter of take your choice. The Chicago *Tribune's* estimate of 12,000 is, as might be expected, laughably low. Most newspapers went along with the police estimate of 20,000 to 25,000. Many old hands at protest marching were inclined to agree with the 40,000 to 50,000 range given by Sanford Gottlieb, of SANE, coordinator of the demonstration.

From the standpoint of newspaper coverage, it was probably the most unsuccessful demonstration of that size ever seen around Washington. Some demonstrations are intentionally mute; the March on Washington was not. It was an old-fashioned harangue. The picketers retreated to the Sylvan Theatre on the Washington Monument grounds in the early afternoon and there spent the next two and a half hours listening to some pretty rousing speeches. Two and a half hours of complaints, entreaties, recommendations, slurs and exposé.

And what, of all this, appeared in the next day's newspapers?

Just now I have checked the Sunday *New York Times* again to be sure I hadn't overlooked something, but so far as I can find that newspaper has not one line of the speeches. As a gazetteer of relative trivia, the *Times* was extremely generous; it set aside a couple of pages for gossip about the march. But when it came to the message as delivered by Norman Thomas, the Socialist Party's Presidential candidate emeritus; Dr. Benjamin Spock, who has taught several million Americans how to rear children; Mrs. Martin Luther King, wife of the civil rights leader; Congressman George Brown, Jr., of California; Carl Oglesby, president of the Students for a Democratic Society; Ronnie Dugger, editor of the *Texas Observer* and a leader of the Texas liberals who have given Johnson political fits for years; Dr. Edwin Dahlberg, former president of the National Council of Churches, and Prof. Joseph M. Duffy, Jr., of Notre Dame—when it came to these two hours of impassioned statement, there was nothing. Not a word.

The Washington Post deserves separate attention. One of the unhappy conversational topics among Washington liberals in the last several months has been the *Post's* new role as a sort of interoffice memo of the Johnson Establishment. The decline of the newspaper has been on the way for many years, but within the last year it has become precipitous.

Since the march was a hometown event, the *Post* might have been expected to treat it with special accuracy and fullness. On the contrary, its pre-march stories were filled with inaccuracies and serious misrepresentations. The day before the march, the paper stated in the lead paragraph of a front-page story, "Delegates to a convention on how to get peace in Vietnam convened in a church yesterday and quickly fell to scrapping over organization and their march against the Vietnam war set for Saturday. Meanwhile, Sanford Gottlieb, coordinator of the march. . . ."

The "convention" referred to by the *Post* was that of the National Coordinating Committee to End the War in Vietnam, a scatter-gun organization of a much more radical sort than that headed by Gottlieb, and it had absolutely no role, official or otherwise, in setting up the march. The NCCEWV convention was one thing, the march was another, and by confusing the two—as it did several times—the *Post* must have confused the public as to the purposes of the march. Most of the conventioners want to pull out of Vietnam now, unilaterally; and while that might be a good idea, it was *not* the idea being pushed by the marchers, which is to cease firing, cease bombing (something Johnson started), stop increasing the size of our expeditionary force (it was 16,000 when LBJ became President; it's now 160,000) and—while the soldiers hang around on stand-by—try to get the United Nations to straighten out the mess in Southeast Asia.

The *Post* thus encouraged what a great hunk of the public was already too eager to believe: that the parade was made up of extremists running in all directions. As for the paper's coverage of the speeches, that came to fifteen words—one and a half sentences—uttered by Norman Thomas.

Elsewhere the *Post* wrote: "Ironically, a U.S. Army bus from Ft. Myer stood by in the Park as a first-aid station." Why it was considered so ironic is not clear, since the marchers were not opposing the U.S. Army but protesting a foreign policy—a distinction which the *Post* was no more capable of making, apparently, than those zany bus-driving patriots in New York and New Jersey who, since they refused to transport marchers to Washington, may find out that Dean Rusk doesn't run the Interstate Commerce Commission.

The *Post*, which advertises itself as "one of the ten best papers in the world," capped off this brassy journalistic performance with an editorial in Sunday's paper in which the editors wrote magisterially, "The right to be heard, fortunately, involves no requirement that the advice of the protesters be followed"—nor, it might have added, be printed.

Carl Oglesby, the gentlemanly revolutionary on the platform, swinging the march's thought into what Spock later admiringly called "new parameters," suggested that corporate liberalism, which is the kind that has activated this country's government since 1932 at least, mucks up everything with its fantasies of benevolence, in Vietnam as elsewhere. "They are fantasies," he said, "because we have lost that mysterious social desire that could make them real. We have

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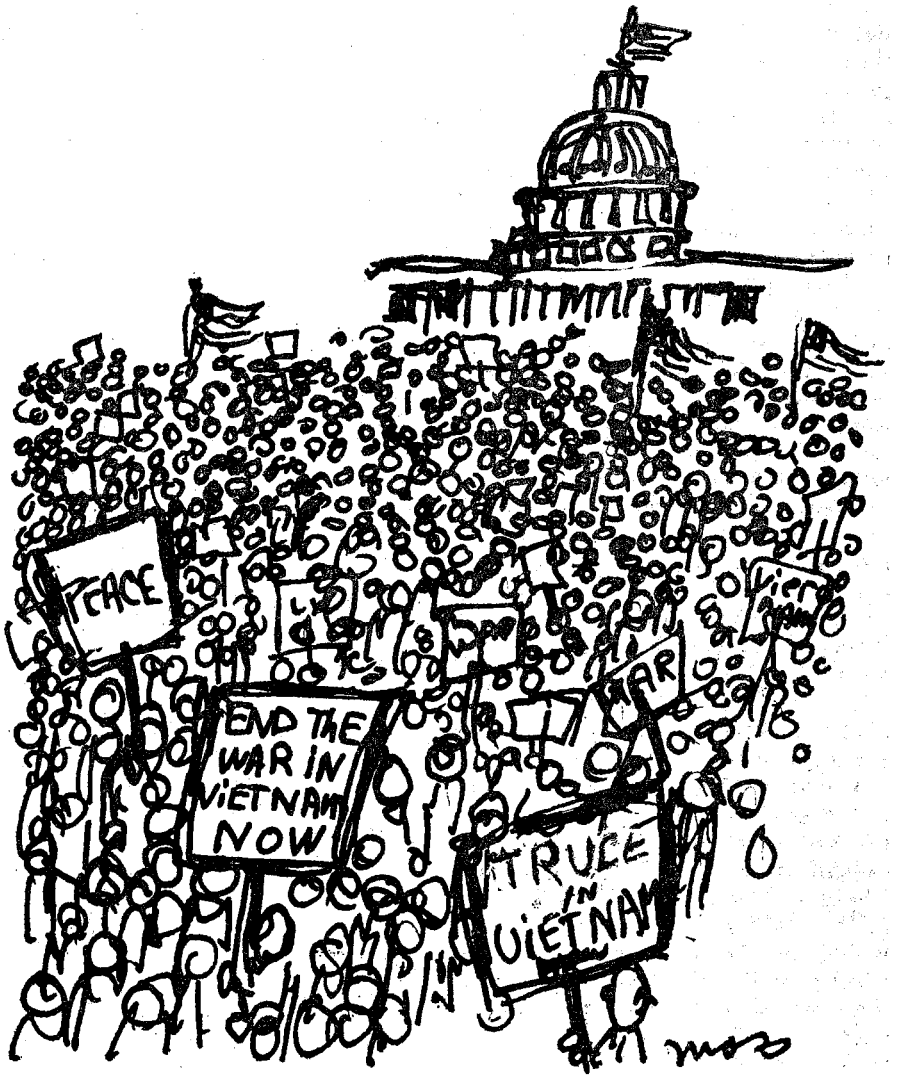
become a nation of young, bright-eyed, hard-hearted, slim-waisted, bullet-headed make-out artists. A nation—may I say it?—of beardless liberals," who "can send 200,000 young men into Vietnam to kill and die in the most dubious of wars, but cannot get 100 voter registrars to go into Mississippi," who cut the War on Poverty budget while planning to spend $2 billion on that "Disneyland creation," the Lockheed and Boeing supersonic transport.

He recalled the 1953 coup in Iran, maneuvered by our CIA, whereby Mossadegh was replaced by General Zahedi, a World War II Nazi collaborator, who thereupon signed some generous leases with, among others, Gulf Oil Corporation. "The CIA's leader for this coup was Kermit Roosevelt. In 1960 Kermit Roosevelt became a vice president of Gulf."

He recalled the 1954 coup—supported by our CIA—in Guatemala. President Arbenz, who had wanted to nationalize a portion of the United Fruit Company's plantations, was deposed. "The following year General Walter Bedell Smith, director of the CIA when the Guatemala venture was being planned, joined the board of the United Fruit Co."

The Dominican Republic might have fared better in 1965, Oglesby further suggested, if our "neutral peacemakers" had been led by someone other than Ellsworth Bunker, Jr., ambassador to the Organization of American States, and "a board member and stock owner of the National Sugar Refining Company"; not to mention the fact that the President was being advised by Abe Fortas, "who has sat for the past nineteen years on the board of the Sucrest Company, which imports blackstrap molasses from the Dominican Republic," and "that rhetorician of corporate liberalism and the late President Kennedy's close friend, Adolf Berle, chairman of that same board." He reminded his listeners, also, that roving Ambassador Averell Harriman's brother Roland is on the National Sugar board

Oglesby did not mean that these are evil men, only that as corporate liberals they perform "for the corporate state a function quite like what the church once performed for the feudal state," seeking "to justify its burdens and protect it from change." Such men can never understand, much less appreciate, revolution.



The other speakers aimed more directly at the war in progress, with these points:

◐ Stop lying. "We are told Hanoi will not negotiate," said Dugger, for one, "but now we learn to our dismay that Hanoi offered to negotiate last fall, before we started the bombings and the troop build-up, and the Johnson Administration declined to meet with them. We learn from Adlai Stevenson through Eric Sevareid that U Thant offered to let us write out our own cease-fire terms and that he would announce them, and we would not do it."

◐ Stop saying that the enemy is adamantly stubborn until you have proved it through overtures. Addressing the President's ear from a distance of 1,500 miles, Norman Thomas insisted that "You have no right to say that such a call for peace and order will be rejected, that this will fail, until you have tried."

◐ Consider the permanent destruction of spirit from our efforts to establish a makeshift and probably temporary puppet government. "A new and horrible way of life is developing in Vietnam," said Dahlberg. "A guerrilla fighter who has been in the war for five years, for example, may marry a girl who has herself been a guerrilla fighter for five years. By the time their first baby is five years old this little youngster, like its parents, will be laying mines and loading ammunition. It is nothing uncommon for a Vietnamese soldier, north or south, to take his wife and children right into the foxhole with him."

◐ How about a little magnanimity, for a change? "The growing emotionalism that comes with all wars grips us and causes us to forget . . . that our enemies might feel that their cause is also just and noble," said Representative Brown, adding with nice irony:

"It may be said that our proposals are naive and unrealistic—the product of fuzzy thinking by idealistic dreamers not charged with

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the hard responsibility of day-to-day decisions. I can only say to you that the realists—the hard-nosed, practical decision makers—have yet to make a single correct decision or prediction in Vietnam. And all the resources of men and material of this country are being poured into South Vietnam in a futile effort to cover up their mistakes.

"I can offer a simple explanation of these mistakes. The enemy we are fighting—the illiterate, fanatic little peasants of Vietnam—have been successfully imbued by their Communist leaders with a lot of fuzzy, unrealistic, idealistic notions which they are willing to die for (notions like freedom from white colonialism and a desire for democracy, self-determination and equality), and the government we are supporting—the generals of Saigon—has failed completely, despite all of our help, in instilling any of these fuzzy, unrealistic, idealistic notions in the people they are supposed to represent."

Stop paying so much attention to the generals, those military thinkers whose breadth of vision is aptly caught in the remark by General Curtis E. LeMay (and quoted at this rally): "My solution to the problem would be to tell the Vietnamese frankly that they've got to draw in their horns and stop their aggression, or we're going to bomb them back into the Stone Age."

Efforts of the march leaders to establish dialogue with the White House was even more futile than their efforts to make their points in the press. Sitting in the Texas sun, President Johnson attempted to conceal his irritation by issuing statements of his deep belief in free speech—scarcely a sensational position, one might suppose, for the highest constitutional officer in the "bastion of democracy," but many newspapers (whose editors are all too aware of Johnson's sensitivity to criticism) gave it top headlines. Several of the March on Washington speakers received it unbelievingly. At best, they accepted it as a new position. Dugger said it had been vintage McCarthyism when Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach, with Johnson's approval, announced plans for investigating the peace movement for traitors. "Considering the President's well-known resentment of criticism of his policies, it is difficult to avoid the belief that he intended to put pressure against dissent by these announcements." Spock agreed. Up to this fall, he said, the peace movement was "treated with condescension but tolerated. Now we are being called unpatriotic" by the Administration.

The President's real attitude toward the marchers was revealed in his refusal to allow any of his immediate White House staff to meet with them. Gottlieb had thought that Lee White or Harry McPherson, two of Johnson's aides, would see them at the White House. I had discovered Friday through inquiries to Johnson's press office that this was not to come about. One official told me, "We are not taking notice of the march." Sure enough, the leaders wound up talking to Sherman Cooper, an aide to McGeorge Bundy, and they had to do it in the Executive Office Building next to the White House.

Cooper is a nice fellow, crushingly earnest, highly inarticulate, and so far removed from the policy level that talking with him is about like talking with, oh, say, Jack Valenti. The march leaders were treated to ninety minutes of nothing.

"It was like a ritual dance," Spock said. "He knew we had come there to propose certain things, and we knew he couldn't agree even if he wanted to. It was all so obviously futile. Cooper isn't Bundyesque; that is, he isn't terribly arrogant. There was just no use talking with him."

Gottlieb said that Cooper didn't think a cease-fire previous to negotiations would be prudent "because the whole thing could be jeopardized by a trigger-happy field lieutenant." Cooper recited his Administration catechism: that the war would be pursued in the future as it is in the present, that the demonstrators might have better luck with a cease-fire appeal to the Vietcong; and settled back for argument. He got plenty of it, and he handled it poorly. Repeatedly, when attempting to rebut something one of the leaders proposed, he would trip over a point he was trying to make and then, just as he began to untangle himself, one of the old tigers in the pack, like Norman Thomas, would start mawling his logic and the poor chap would be completely undone.

It is almost senseless to attempt to "feel out" the White House through some random remark of an aide to an aide, but Gottlieb did take feeble heart from Cooper's insistence that Johnson's position is still the one he enunciated on July 28. That was a speech in which he announced a step-up in military efforts, to be sure, but in which he also gave his first nod in the direction of reunification, by speaking of elections in the south or in the *north and* south. That was the hopeful part.

Actually, one concrete aspect of this march offers more hope than any random conversational droppings from poor Cooper. That was the respectable middle-class quality of the marchers, something *The New York Times* just couldn't get over. There were a few, very few, unwashed bongo drummers in the turn-out — certainly no more of that sort in the parade than were matched in the anti-parade crowd across the street in Lafayette Park, strutting around with "Burn the Teach-in Professor" signs. Perhaps a couple hundred on either side, canceling one another out, and leaving the field in command of 30,000 or 40,000 average, patriotic, disturbed Americans, such as Ed Bloch of New Jersey, who won a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star leading a Marine rifle platoon on Okinawa in World War II, or the Rev. David Gracie, pastor of St. Joseph's Episcopal Church in Detroit, who said, "If the only people on our side were far-out left wingers, I might begin to wonder if I hadn't overlooked something, that maybe I'm wrong. But when a man like John Knight agrees with our basic position, I take heart." Knight is one of the owners of the powerful Knight newspaper chain, whose editorial policies range from moderate to conservative.

War veterans had been asked to gather in one place, and perhaps two companies of them—about 400—marched past the applauding marchers. In their faces and clothes and faint memories of a military carriage they were indistinguishable from the American Legion rank and file on any Veterans' Day. There was some comfort in this resemblance.

Middle-class Americans may not be any wiser than beatniks—but they mean a lot more to Johnson, whose backbone of consensus is built right through the middle. These weren't civil rights protesters, revved up emotionally (there were, incidentally, few Negroes in the march). They were low-keyed book-

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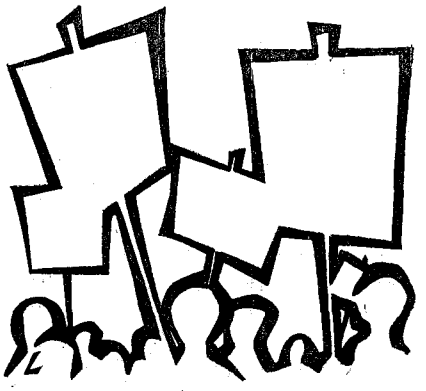
keepers and lawyers and housewives, many of them no doubt with a vote or two for Eisenhower on their record, but enough disturbed about a witless war that they would travel from as far as Pullman, Wash., to let their President know how they felt. When Johnson learns that the march was made of consensus types, it just might make a difference.

Many of the marchers and march leaders indicated that, being a part of the "middle Left," they considered themselves no more radical than President Johnson sometimes is. "We must remember," said Mrs. King, "that as late as 1957 a strong Senate Majority Leader stated unequivocally, 'I will not commit the precious lives of American boys to protect a dying white colonialism in Southeast Asia.' That strong Senate leader is now an uncertain President."

Herein lies a second hope: that Johnson—remembering his habit of reversing the field—will be smart enough to go along with the march leaders' judgment of themselves as middle Left, whether or not he privately considers them more than that, and to prevent his hirelings, like Katzenbach, from smearing them as subversive. Only by protecting their reputations can he save the area they occupy for a possible retreat of his own.

In any event, there was the sheer mass. A nice turnout. "A little leverage," as Spock called it, "to keep the Administration doubtful."



Treason of the Experts . . . . . Eric Bentley

Last spring, the president of a leading American university said that teachers should think twice before giving students advice in areas where they have no special expertise. How many times should university presidents think before giving teachers advice in areas where they have no more expertise than their faculty? And what is all this about "expertise" anyway? When is expertise ever required of people except when they are already judged to be wrongheaded? Are professors who support highly patriotic wars asked to have expertise in warfare or even in patriotism? Are they not —so far as their presidents are concerned—merely praised for their high sense of duty? Similarly, students who protest against a war are asked to have expertise, while those who support it are allowed to be ignoramuses — undoubtedly their ignorance is a big help. Similarly, too, McGeorge Bundy and his friends try to disqualify criticism on the plea that their critics don't have access to essential information: if we all had access to the data Mr. Bundy has access to, we would all reach his conclusions. Since we don't, we must trust him.

We are hearing a lot about trust these days. And the man we are above all to trust is Lyndon Johnson. Which is too bad, as he is not an unusually trustworthy person. I voted for him at the last election because I considered that he had virtues not shared by his opponent. An unusual degree of trustworthiness was not, however, one of these. People used to ask of Richard Nixon: would you buy a used car from this man? Well, which of us wouldn't prefer buying a used car from Barry Goldwater to buying one from Lyndon Johnson? The very quality for which Johnson is most admired — political dexterity — carries with it the defect of trickiness. He strikes me also as a man lacking in all conviction. That seems to be the source of his strength: he is without prejudice. He could at one time talk and act like a segregationist, but he *really* didn't mean it: he doesn't *really* mean anything. He is like a lawyer: totally willing to take his client's side, and give his all to it, with every outward sign of sincerity and felt fervor. When his client is the public, this makes him a very democratic figure, and when his client is only part of the public, he will show great skill in (a) wooing other parts; and (b) pretending that he has already wooed and won all parts. However, from time to time, the unforeseen happens, and someone actually speaks *against* Johnson or even acts against him. It doesn't seem right, but it happens. And right now in the United States that is the one fly in the political ointment. Everything is under control. All would be well. We would have the best of both worlds—all the comfortable advantage of peace and welfare added to the heroic afflatus of a just war—if it were not for this impudent indocility, this active . . . mistrust. Even the Bible, though warning us not to put our trust in princes, says nothing against Presidents.

Trust the President. Trust Mr. Bundy. Both Mr. Bundys. Also Mr. Rusk. And until recently there was the supremely trustworthy Adlai Stevenson. Yet Adlai Stevenson was caught lying in the UN when he denied that the United States had anything to do with the Bay of Pigs invasion. We have all lied in our time, but maybe not in such a big way. Besides we don't all ask everyone to take us on trust. Then again, some lies make for practical problems. Let me again cite the Bay of Pigs. In connection with that adventure a government spokesman defended lying. It might be a patriotic duty, he said. Maybe so, but we would like to know when our leaders are *not* lying, so we can talk over the truth—the actual facts—with them. When Mr. Bundy implies that if we knew the inside story about Vietnam, we would approve of each stand our government has taken, including no doubt stands that contradict one another, is he patriotically lying? Is Johnson's explanation of what he did in the Dominican Republic a tissue of lies?

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Consider one admitted lie. Debating on TV with John F. Kennedy on October 22, 1960, the Vice President of the United States let the people know that, so far as his government was concerned, U. S. support for an anti-Castro invasion was out of the question. Kennedy's plea for such support he called "the most shockingly reckless proposal ever made in our history by a Presidential candidate during a campaign." Nearly four years later *The New York Times* announced: "Mr. Nixon subsequently explained in his book *Six Crises* that he believed Mr. Kennedy had been endangering the security of the invasion plan . . . and therefore felt obliged to attack a plan he privately supported." It follows from this that when the intelligent citizen hears one of his trustworthy pastors and masters attacking a plan, any plan, he should ask himself whether maybe the said pastor and master isn't privately supporting that plan. Perhaps these trustworthy folk could actually be trusted if one made a habit of reversing all their statements? Could one trust them to support a thing privately *if* they are publicly attacking it? I wouldn't count on it. What we *can* probably count on is that at the moment when we are confronted with any crisis, we shall not be placed in possession of the facts that govern the outcome.

Mistrust is a better guide than trust to what actually seems to have been going on in all the great crises of the past few years. That one no longer trusted Stevenson in 1960 was lucky. And those who trusted Kennedy at that time must surely have got a shock from Arthur Schlesinger's account of the Bay of Pigs in 1965. In 1960, the team was being loyal to the captain. The Bay of Pigs was all set to be mentioned in some future "1776 and All That" as "a Good Thing." And Kennedy had approved the invasion on the ground of High Ideals. One gathers, however, from the Schlesinger memoir that what really interested Kennedy was . . . public relations. He wanted to be known as Strong, and the formula was Strength through Guns. Hence, anyone who died in that unfortunate encounter died to keep Kennedy's reputation up. Which brings military campaigning into the area of political campaigning; and one again had the impression that the two were quite close in the summer of 1964 when, in his turn, Johnson wanted to seem Strong. The question at the time was whether Goldwater could make Johnson seem an Appeaser. Just at that moment, the American Navy was attacked by the Vietnamese. At least that was what we were told, and considering where the Navy was, it didn't seem too improbable. Johnson's ideals soared sky-high (i.e., the order was given to drop bombs), and whatever Vietnamese got killed can today rejoice in Heaven or elsewhere that . . . Johnson was elected.

Since being elected, Johnson's main point about the Vietnamese has been that he keeps asking them all to negotiate but they won't. Another provable if patriotic lie is involved. Hanoi is now known, even in the United States, to have also offered to negotiate. Arthur Miller brought this up recently, and a Johnsonian magazine that reported the matter tried to refute Miller with the observation that the terms offered by Hanoi were unacceptable. So: "refusal to negotiate" means "refusal to agree to our terms." Besides which there might be something to say of the tactic of *bombing* an antagonist, ostensibly as a way of forcing him to negotiate, but actually as a way of forcing your terms on him. Only to a public relations man is that any different from plain old war. But we are ruled by public relations men. Which is another reason why, much as we may admire the flexibility of the gentlemen, we cannot reasonably be asked to give them our trust. (Hardly had I finished writing this paragraph than *Look* came out with the Eric Sevareid article on Stevenson, and James Reston published his comment on President Johnson's "candor" concerning yet another offer to negotiate on the part of Hanoi. Further comment would be superfluous.)

A corollary of that university president's remarks would seem to be that professors who *are* experts do have the right to hand out advice. One question would be: expert in what? History? Geography? Political theory, and communism in particular? Southeast Asia, and Vietnam in particular? Then again, aren't experts purchasable? Can't anyone have the experts he can afford? And can't anyone hire experts to defend any position he likes to take? Above all, will not the entrenched positions, in the nature of things, be well defended? Won't Soviet experts *on* capitalism be experts *against* capitalism? And isn't just the converse true of American experts on this subject? Even if I am wrong here, do the experts ever agree on anything? And, if they don't, which ones should we be guided by? Are there experts on choosing-among-experts and, if so, do *these* experts agree?

A moment's thought about such difficulties can only cause us to wonder why there is so much talk of expertise all of a sudden. Isn't the main commitment of democracy, for better or for worse, to the nonexpert, i.e., people at large? For America, the country with the strongest populist tradition in the world, it is certainly strange doctrine that we should all be dissuaded from independent thinking and individualistic action.

The argument behind the "patriotic" line of college presidents and other Establishment figures is this: America is not a Communist country and therefore we need not believe Communist experts; it is an anti-Communist country, and therefore we should follow the advice of the anti-Communist experts. One can respect this logic to the extent of admitting that, in a war, there are only two sides and thus, if one took a side, but not Johnson's side, in the Vietnam war, one would be fighting against the Army of the United States and alongside many Communists. But then, unless one *is* a Communist, one is not taking a side, not advocating fighting for Hanoi, but a cessation of fighting by all parties. President Johnson has been urging recently that the Vietnam demonstrations are against the national interest. Of course, they are against the national interest if his policy is *in* the national interest, but that is precisely the question. Anti-war talk is *always* against the interest of a government at war: does that mean that anti-war talk is to be permitted only when there is no war to be anti? That such talk brings comfort to "the enemy" may well be true. In a given case, the enemy may deserve comfort, and, in any case, such talk has to be heard, surely, before it can be assessed.

Still, it will be urged, simply not

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volunteering in North Vietnam's army is not enough to detach one from the Communists. All the party would demand of a United States citizen would be anti-war propaganda, and this all who oppose the Vietnam action are providing. Aren't Communists strange bedfellows, especially for the young, anti-war liberals of our college communities? The answer to this is: Certainly, but to eschew strange bedfellows would be to eschew politics itself—which is, of course, what many of the old want many of the young to do. Since political conflicts, like wars, tend to have only two sides, a willingness to make alliances with the lesser foe against the greater is of the essence of politics. Naturally, there is often a question which *is* the lesser foe. Some people would be happier if Roosevelt had joined with Hitler against Stalin. That he did the opposite, however, gives our present-day pacifists an august precedent for their strange sleeping around. It is, of course, a matter of beggars can't be choosers. Against an imminent and total threat you accept any help available, and leave the question of your indebtedness to be answered later, if it can be: otherwise there may be no "you" to answer it.

I am not one of those who are blithe and unskeptical about "working with the Communists." "Whoever sleeps in their camp wakes up one morning to find himself robbed"—this is a quotation from myself, and a statement I do not repudiate. It was based on considerable personal experience. Many of the Communists I knew are still "there," and many of the practices I deplored are still current. At the same time, it would be ridiculous to assume that communism has not changed in the past ten years. Yet this is, in general, what *is* assumed in Washington and in American embassies round the world. And it is not just a matter of communism's maybe not being as bad as they think, but of its being a good deal different from what they think and indeed of its not being just one thing any more, as they assume it to be. We have grown used to laughing at the Communist use of the word capitalism, because for us the one word cannot sum up the multifarious ways of business. But our own men now use the word communism in just such a manner. If communism were indeed One and Indivisible, Russia and China would have combined to keep America out of Vietnam—or have joined America in destroying civilization. Johnson, Rusk and company would not have been able to show us what great moralists they are, except for a division in the ranks of communism which Washington has hardly begun to understand!

I have just spent a year behind the iron curtain as a "lackey of capitalism" (i.e., paid by the Ford Foundation), and meeting American officials here and there, charming fellows, for the most part, have gained the impression that they have no idea what a Communist, today, is like, nor yet what it is like to be a citizen of a Communist country. Some have not studied communism in any form. Others have studied it as if in preparation to be secret agents; others as if the only aim were to get an A in anti-communism. Now I would be the first to recognize that one might learn theology from an atheist, but I also think a theology student should at some point get to know what theologians are like.

One of the assumptions of the American official class is that living under communism is a fate worse than death. A corollary dogma is that everyone else thinks so too except for a hard core of Communists and fellow travelers. Whatever truth these two dogmas had in Stalin's day, they have both become provably false. It is not that everyone you meet behind the iron curtain likes his government, but the spirit of the Hungarian revolt of 1956 is no longer widespread, partly because it is now known that no help is forthcoming from the West, partly because life in Hungary—and many other places—is now a good deal pleasanter. Also, though it is a shock for the few Americans who bother to find out, many Easterners think that, while the East is bad, the West is worse. And Vietnam is cited as a vivid example. "What the Russians did in Budapest was outrageous; what the Americans are doing in Vietnam is *more* outrageous—first, because Vietnam is not on their frontiers and, second, because this is an endlessly continued and calculated outrage, not just a single mad lunge." This is not a quotation from one Easterner but from hundreds. Since anti-Communist zeal is seen as driving Americans into actions characteristic of Stalinism at its height, and since at just this time Russia and other Eastern countries have been de-Stalinizing themselves to a certain extent, many Easterners have come in recent years to think worse of America and better of their own regimes.

That the Communist movement exploits the word peace is very true. So do all political movements in all countries, now that open praise of war is no longer successful claptrap. But the Communist-led section of the peace movement is actually on the level, to the extent that the interests of communism can in general be better served by peace than war. Perhaps war serves Communist interests only when, as in Vietnam, a capitalist power takes the offensive and so drives *patriots* into the arms of the Communist Party. For while the official class in America can think of the struggle as being between Communists and a free world, the Communists are on to the fact that the living political force in Asia (as in Africa) is neither communism nor belief in a free world but nationalism. It would probably be impossible for the Orient to see any war America might wage against a small country there as other than a war of white imperialism against native nationalism. And as to Vietnam, they can make a strong case that is not in the least undermined by Johnson's insistence that he has no territorial ambitions in the East, because everyone there is well aware of the invisible imperialism of investments, which can be defended by soldiers flown to any territory whatever in a matter of hours.

At this point, the Establishment will ask if, then, I am proposing to *appease* the Communists? And some will add that people like me (or is it people like *them*?) appeased Hitler in the thirties. How about Walter Lippmann, for instance? Wasn't he some kind of "appeaser" in the thirties? And, if he was, doesn't that explain his advocacy of "appeasement" now? And entitle us to disregard him? This was strongly implied in a recent article in the *New York Times Magazine*, "A Professor Votes *for* Mr. Johnson" by John P. Roche, and surely Mr. Roche does not stand alone. The cold warriors, self-styled and otherwise, all bank very heavily indeed on a historical analogy, which they seldom expose to full view, between the present and the

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thirties, and specifically between the present-day Communist powers and the Nazi-Fascist powers of a generation ago. To me it seems that these people are so determined to play Churchill that they would feel badly let down if the Soviets refused their assigned role as Hitler Germany. Yet wouldn't it make sense —from the Communist viewpoint, I mean, of course—for the Soviets to do just that? In that case some people are determined to play Churchill against an *imaginary* Hitler Germany.

I think Professor Roche's other arguments can be answered too. But he is an expert, and had better be answered by experts: I confidently hand him over to those he has shrugged off with quips. What I have a vivid sense of, after reading his piece, is his style. A quotation may bring it to mind:

> *Even our bombing pattern in the North has followed a careful etiquette of "controlled response": we have observed what Herman Kahn would call the "city threshold" and only went after a few of the S.A.M. missile launchers when they began to broaden their protective mission beyond Hanoi-Haiphong. We are, in short, fighting a carefully limited war in the effort to attain a perfectly reasonable objective. . . .*

It must be nice to feel that such a thing as bombing can be neatly combined with perfect reasonableness, but some of us find this coolly babbling prose unconvincing, if not corrupt; and I think I shall start praying at night, God save me from Professor Roche's careful etiquette! Someone lives in a dream world, he or I; for let me admit that I am one of those who cannot think of the American action in Vietnam otherwise than in terms of outrage. It is true that history is one outrage after another, and that the Communists have perpetrated some gigantic outrages in their time. But is America to be excused its atrocities on the ground that others commit them too? Is it even to lead the way in outrage now, because others have led the way at some other date? Or if it is a matter of evening up the score, wasn't a tremendous step toward that made at Hiroshima? And are not further steps taken almost monthly in the deep South? I miss in Professor Roche's exegesis the note of concern. If he does not understand my indignation, I do not understand his nonchalance.

AHM READY TO BEGIN UNCONDITIONAL PEACE DISCUSSIONS WITH ANY GOVERNMENT---OUTTA MA WAY BOY---AT ANY PLACE, AT ANY TIME.
L.B.J.
TWO NORTH VIET PEACE OVERTURES IN 1964
UN

Macpherson, Toronto Star

But I am not a pacifist. That the problems of international relations will get solved by the peace movement as we know it seems to me even more unlikely than that they will get solved through the "normal channels" of government negotiation. And on Vietnam I support that eminent nonpacifist Charles de Gaulle in advocating, first, a cease-fire and then a neutralization of South Vietnam. Is even de Gaulle considered a fellow traveler these days? Or an appeaser? He *is* considered an "impossible" fellow, but isn't that chiefly because he has let down the team, and made it hard for them to represent a more reasonable position on Vietnam as appeasement and fellow traveling? Let de Gaulle's motives be what they may, it is certainly true that he represents millions of people in the world today who, while firmly rejecting communism, reject American intervention just as firmly. Does anyone really believe that Harold Wilson is any more enthusiastic about the American role in Vietnam than de Gaulle? He is only much more easily overawed by superior power.

But this is another discussion. Here I am concerned with the peace movement, which is united only in its opposition to American policy in Vietnam, and not in affirmation of any remedy. Even from a nonpacifist viewpoint, however, the present peace movement may serve a good purpose. It takes all sorts to make —or remake—a world. It may even be that it is best for the intellectual to represent something other than the viewpoint that is, or even is going to be, dominant, and that one should ask of him how much he modifies the existing state of things, rather than what he would do if he were in power. However this may be, it seems likely that what most menaces the world today is neither communism nor imperialism as such, but the possession of so much power by so few men, be they "Communists" in Moscow or Peking, or "imperialists" in Washington, especially since the official view of each side is that it has a monopoly of civic virtue.

In this situation, the critical act, the intellectual's act, can have historic importance—whether it be Yevtushenko criticizing Soviet anti-Semitism or Robert Lowell refusing an invitation from Lyndon Johnson. In such ways is the claim to a monopoly of virtue challenged. Which in turn means that the regime concerned will be that much

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less ready to *act* in the name of virtue. Such protests are against "the national interest" not only in encouraging the enemy abroad but also—which the authorities are naturally not so apt to mention—in discouraging the trigger-happy friends of power at home. For the world's danger is what the *Strangelove* movie said it was. Not literally, of course. It was quite beside the point for the experts to refute Terry Southern, et al., by solemn proof that the bomb cannot be exploded by a single "kook" in the War Department. The point was, rather, that our whole world is, in all too real a sense, crazy; anything is possible, and the worst really can happen.

In this situation the classic function of the intellectual—to be the voice of reason amid the clamor of the world's irrationality—attains a peculiar urgency. The intellectuals can hope, must hope, to discourage the generals and the politicians from blowing the world up in one of their fits of patriotic (or proletarian) virtue. *Discouragement* is of the essence, and it was good to note that Lowell *had* discouraged even the ebullient Texan who is our Commander in Chief.

Intellectuals of the world unite! In a degree, they have already done just that. Living behind the iron curtain, I was surprised by the extent to which the intelligentsia there has the same gripes—and hopes—as ourselves. And they have to fight off the same facile accusation of disloyalty with the same entirely sincere answer: no, they don't wish to "defect" to the "other side," they wish to remake their side or, if that is not immediately practical, to restrain it from practicing what it preaches, to prevent it from having the courage of its professed convictions, to *discourage* it.

Discouragement, deflation—this is the negative side. There is much negative work to do, and the talents of an intelligentsia, from a Terry Southern to a Dwight Macdonald, may be specially apt for this work. But the intention, naturally, is positive, and there is a corresponding body of positive labor before us. It is the work of conciliation. Here the pioneers have been Martin Luther King and Pope John XXIII. Whether or not one can envisage the world acting on the lines laid down in "Pacem in Terris," one can surely believe that the spirit the encyclical embodies might influence the world. If one cannot believe this, one's view of politics is wholly cynical. Not to give politics up in that way is to bear witness to a degree of faith in human possibility. But this faith intellectuals must possess, if only to justify their own existence as the carriers of intellect.

So when I am asked if I think our students are entitled to protest, I must not limit my answer to a patronizing yes, but must go on to congratulate the younger generation on boldly bearing witness at a time when so many of their elders were pussyfooting around discussing *whether* witness should be borne. This is not to say that all forms of protest are proper—or even shrewd. Some are obviously idiotic; some feeble; some morally ambiguous; some morally wrong. But the discontent itself is more than justified; it is necessary. For aside from its political effects, it is helping in an age of phony virtue and real murder, to keep alive both the body and the spirit.

Jeane Dixon

PSYCHIC STAR OF THE YEAR . . . Daniel Cohen

One of the hottest current items in bookstores is *A Gift of Prophecy*, subtitled: "The phenomenal Jeane Dixon who publicly foretold President Kennedy's assassination and other world shaking events. These and many fascinating new predictions are documented here."

This collection of stories about the prophetic Mrs. Dixon has been stuck together with marshmallow prose by Ruth Montgomery, a syndicated Washington columnist who has for years printed a list of Jeane Dixon's New Year's predictions. The book has spent months high on the bestseller list (general, not fiction), and was the major feature of a recent issue of *Reader's Digest*. Millions have already read it; millions more will when the inevitable paperback editions and newspaper serials appear.

Daniel Cohen is managing editor of Science Digest.

Jeane Dixon's public predictions fall into four categories:

1. Statements so obvious and general that they can't possibly be wrong. It takes no gift to predict, as Mrs. Dixon has for the past few years, that we will have racial troubles, trouble with China and trouble with de Gaulle.

2. Statements that lend themselves to a host of interpretations. Mrs. Dixon's prediction that in 1963 education would be a fashionable topic of conversation has been interpreted by her biographer to be a prediction of the school integration crisis in that year.

3. Some prophecies that are dead wrong. Mrs. Dixon foretold that the United States would go to war with China in 1958 over Quemoy and Matsu and that Walter Reuther would actively seek the Presidency in 1964. In these cases she says that she was shown the correct symbols but misinterpreted them. Other times, she simply doesn't admit that she was wrong. She still maintains that Castro hired Lee Harvey Oswald to assassinate Kennedy, and that two Russian cosmonauts, a man and a woman, were killed in an attempted moon landing.

4. Lucky guesses. After making statements for many years, and Mrs. Dixon has been issuing predictions for more than a quarter of a century, a prophet is bound to have a collection of a few startling hits.

But even here Mrs. Dixon fares poorly. Her much-publicized warning of Kennedy's assassination turns out on closer examination to be a great deal less than awe-inspiring. A 1956 article in *Parade* magazine reported that she predicted that a blue-eyed Democratic President elected in 1960 would die in office. That is the only public forecast of Kennedy's death that she made. In fact, she predicted in 1960

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that Nixon would win. When he didn't, she hedged by saying that Nixon was the rightful winner but that the Democrats had stolen the election. In her annual New Year's predictions for 1963 she said nothing about an assassination. However, Miss Montgomery finds some significance in this statement: "The year will see a beginning of the decline in influence of many Ivy League colleges, and non-Ivy League colleges will come into greater prominence and importance." Says Miss Montgomery: "The man who became President that November was a graduate of Southwest Texas State Teacher's College, and as a Texas drawl began to replace the Boston twang in the White House executive wing, the Ivy League alumni lost their predominance."

The latest prophetic coup claimed by Mrs. Dixon is that she predicted the great Northeast power failure. This claim has been picked up by columnists and radio commentators and provides a good example of how Jeane Dixon gets her reputation. What *A Gift of Prophecy* actually says is that she had a vision that a Russian satellite passed over the United States and that as it did so all the lights went out. She interpreted this to mean that the Soviets have some sort of secret weapon that can immobilize our communication and lighting systems.

According to *A Gift of Prophecy*, Jeane Dixon has made many still more specific (and accurate) predictions, but these have mainly been in private sessions with personal friends. It is recorded that she has given remarkable glimpses of the future to well-known public figures: FDR, Churchill, Senator Kefauver, Speaker Sam Rayburn and Carol Lombard. Unfortunately, all of these famous people are dead, and well beyond confirming or denying the accounts.

Much of *A Gift of Prophecy* is taken up with telling the reader what a wonderful, generous, loving and religious woman Jeane Dixon is. How, despite the fact that she is supposed to have told President Roosevelt not to "pamper" the colored people, and that she sees the present civil rights movement as, "the Negroes being pushed by an underground force — shoved upwards before they were ready . . . being used by others for selfish ends," it is nevertheless true that "when Jeane speaks of the colored race, she does so with love in her heart."

When you scrape off all the girlish gush, what is left is a picture of the wife of a Washington real estate dealer with a simplistic conservative outlook, who likes to speculate about world affairs as well as about the personal lives of her friends. The only thing phenomenal about Jeane Dixon is the amount of attention she has been able to attract.

Life, always alert to the latest national enthusiasm, ran a sympathetic profile on her in October. Although the magazine did not endorse her prophecies, it took no pains to point out their obvious flaws, and Mrs. Dixon sent *Life* a warm letter of thanks. Even the normally hardheaded *Wall Street Journal* has jumped on the Dixon bandwagon. In a major front-page article of November 17, staff reporter William D. Hartley wrote: "Mrs. Dixon has made some predictions which proved false, but on the whole she has been accurate to an uncanny degree."

Jeane Dixon's enormous popularity comes from two sources. First, those who share her view of the Negro revolution will want to believe the implication that the whole thing is a plot. After the 1964 election, right wingers comforted one another with the slogan, "27 million Americans can't be wrong," and according to Mrs. Dixon they weren't. One of her predictions is that Goldwater and his principles will be vindicated.

But political sympathy is only part of the story. The real wellspring of Jeane Dixon's success is that she exploits a deep mass hunger for a glimpse into the future. Practically the first thing man scratched on clay tablets when he learned to write were texts on hepatoscopy (divination by examination of the liver of a sacrificial animal) and extispicy (divination by examination of all the entrails). This is a bit messy and the practice has largely been abandoned in modern times, but that other ancient Mesopotamian development, astrology, is still very much with us, as shown by the clutter of astrological magazines and astrology columns in newspapers.

Jeane Dixon, too, dabbles in astrology which she says was taught to her by a Jesuit. Her most important prophecy contains a healthy portion of astrology. On February 5, 1962, she had a vision indicating that a child had been born, somewhere in the Middle East, who will revolutionize religion and bring all mankind together under a new Christianity. February 5, 1962, was the date of a rare conjunction of five planets, and astrologers the world over had been predicting earth-shaking events for that occasion. Some even forecast the end of the world. It turned out to be an ordinary day but Mrs. Dixon's prediction saves the astrologers' faces, since this revolutionary religious change will not take place until the end of the century — the year 2000 — also a significant date in the calculations of numerologists.

Early Christians tried in vain to put an end to all forms of prophecy that smacked of pagan beliefs. Instead, they added a new and terrible element—the Day of Judgment. To the early Christian the end of the world was not an event of the vague future, but something to be expected momentarily. Both numerology and some passages in the Book of Revelation seemed to indicate that the year 1000 was to be the last, and a panic swept Europe. The world did not end but neither did the superstition; end-of-the-world scares crop up regularly to the present day.

William Miller, the prophet founder of the Seventh-Day Adventists, discovered in the Books of Revelation and Daniel that the world would end on October 22, 1844. Such a definite prediction is always dangerous, and on October 23, 1844, many of the 50,000 faithful who had gathered on hilltops to await the Second Coming began denouncing Miller as a fraud. But the sect survived the survival of the world and today the Seventh-Day Adventist Church has some 300,000 members. Jehovah's Witnesses, the fastest growing religious denomination in America, is an offshoot of Adventism. For them the slogan, "Millions now living shall never die," is not symbolic.

Prophecies of imminent Armageddon are the basic prop for evangelistic preachers from Billy Graham on down. They are rarely as specific as William Miller, but they

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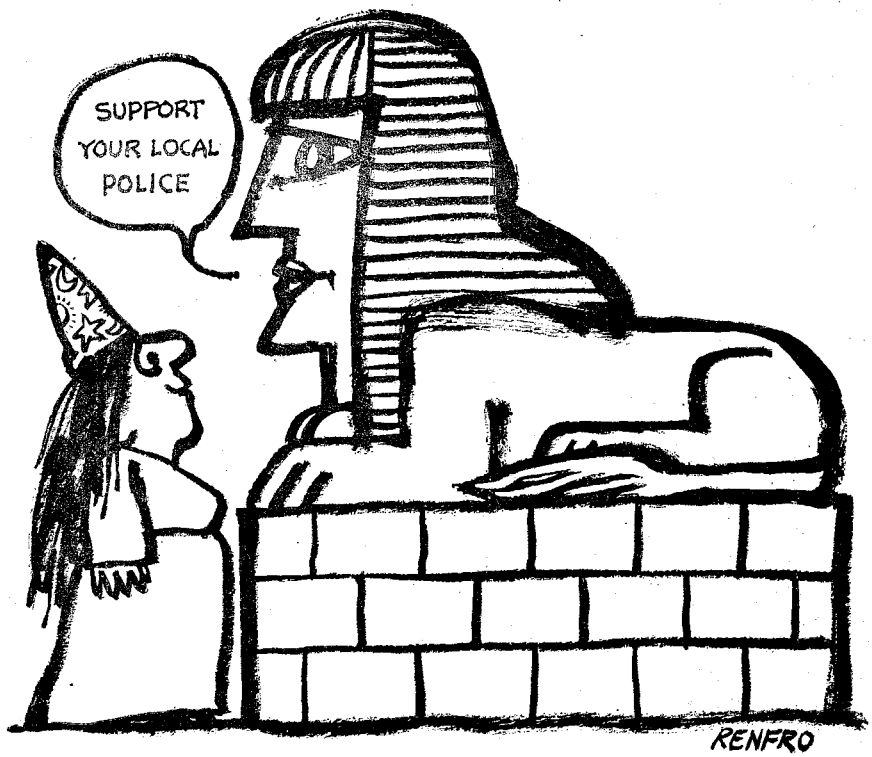
vividly picture the world as being in its last days. The signs and portents harkening the end are no longer the comets, earthquakes and plagues of Medieval times, but communism, crime and the legal sale of *Fanny Hill*.

In what I take to be a different twist to the world prophecy, Jeane Dixon sees 1980 as the year of the great war with China that will devastate mankind. But by 2000 the survivors will be united in a new universal religion.

Necromancy, conjuring up the dead to give a glimpse of the future, began in ancient times, and continues up through today's mediums and table-tapping seances. Mrs. Dixon does not neglect this side of the mystic arts. While watching President Kennedy's funeral she had the grotesque, but obscurely significant, vision of the dead President dancing an Irish jig on top of his coffin.

Dream interpretation is yet another time-honored method of divination. Freud pretty well killed the prophetic dream for the sophisticated, but the *Old Gypsy Dream Book* and *Egyptian Dream Book* still sell in Harlem and other areas where the ever-hopeful policy player tries to find the key to riches in his sleep. The eclectic Mrs. Dixon has prophetic dreams. Her most revealing took place on the night of July 14, 1952, when she dreamed that a snake had invaded her bed and was wrapped around her legs and hips. Somehow this meant that the future wisdom was to come from the East, but Freudians might find a different interpretation.

Despite an occasional burning at the stake, prophets emerged from the Middle Ages as a respectable and powerful group. By the 16th century they were regularly consulted by popes and kings. The greatest prophet of the time was Michel de Nostre-Dame or Nostradamus, who became the Rasputin of Catherine de Medici of France. Today there is still a surprisingly large audience for his fuzzy, mystical quatrains which have been used to explain everything from the rise of Napoleon to World War II. A Manhattan bookseller, who claims to be a reincarnation of Nostradamus, generates a good deal of personal publicity with his annual list of predictions.



By the middle of the 19th century, however, the whole prophecy business had suffered a crushing loss of status. Whereas seers had once been persons of education and influence (the great astronomer Kepler was better known in his own day as an astrologer), prophecy was relegated to despised outsiders like Gypsies. Their methods were the crudest: Palmistry, crystal gazing, reading cards and tea leaves. It looked like the end of the 5,000-year history of prophecy, and in 1898 the French encyclopedia *Nouveau Larousse Illustré* could write with some confidence: "astrology has hardly any adherents other than swindlers who play on public credulity and even these are fast disappearing." The encyclopedists proved no better than the prophets at charting the future, for the 20th century has witnessed a major revival.

It is from the debased era of 19th-century prophecy that Jeane Dixon draws most of her inspiration. When she was 8 years old a Gypsy fortuneteller looked at her palms and said: "This little girl is going to be very famous. She will be able to foresee world-wide changes, because she is blessed with the gift of prophecy. Never have I seen such palm lines!" The Gypsy gave her a crystal ball and her career began.

The most widely believed prophetic event of this century is the Miracle of Fatima. During 1917 three Portuguese children claimed to see visions of the Virgin Mary on a hill at Fatima. She gave them prophecies which have since been related to the two World Wars and the rise of communism in Russia. The children's stories created such excitement that on the promised date of the Virgin's sixth and final appearance 70,000 people waited on the hillside at Fatima. Some of the faithful said they saw the solar disc spin around in the sky, others saw nothing, but the appearances at Fatima were officially accepted as a miracle by the Church authorities. One of the prophecies was sealed in an envelope and reportedly conveyed to Rome where it was to remain secret until 1960. For some reason the prophecy has never been made public, although Catholic information centers were besieged with inquiries. Rumors circulated that the Church was suppressing the prophecy because it was so frightening, but no one really knows. No one that is except Jeane Dixon, who claims she was given an advance prophetic look in 1958. The sealed message of Fatima confirmed other Dixon prophecies.

There are many levels of belief. Sophisticates who might be amused by Jeane Dixon prefer the "scientific" study of prophecy and other

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phenomena that come under the heading of extrasensory perception or ESP. Today the capital of this research is the laboratories of Dr. J. B. Rhine in Durham, N. C.

For more than forty years, Dr. Rhine has tried to apply some semblance of the scientific method to the study of prophecy (or precognition as he calls it), telepathy (being aware of the thoughts of another person) and clairvoyance (seeing an event without physically being there). All these abilities, in his opinion, are part of a single encompassing ability—extrasensory perception.

Rhine's basic test is to have subjects call the order of a deck of cards. Over the years he and his associates have conducted tens of thousands of tests under varying conditions. The results have not been very impressive, and the methods have been severely criticized by orthodox scientists who point out that all the non-chance results could easily be due to simple errors in the construction of the tests or the recording of the results.

Yet because Rhine has worked so long and hard, and since many of his published works are as dull as the average scientific paper, many people have gotten the impression that he has found a natural, physical explanation for ESP. Rhine has never made such a claim. On the contrary, he believes that ESP "liberates [the] sciences from the confinement of a materialist metaphysics." To Rhine all such phenomena are spiritual.

Rhine has offered to test those who claim to have ESP abilities, but few professional mediums or fortunetellers have ever entered his laboratory. Says Rhine: "For the most part, I think they are probably afraid the tests would be too severe for them."

Jeane Dixon is the psychic star of the moment, but she is not the only big-time psychic operating today. A few years ago the papers were full of stories about Peter Hurkos, a Dutchman who claimed that a fall on the head had awakened within him the powers of "psychometry . . . divination of facts concerning an object or its owner through contact with or proximity to an object."

With characteristic bravado, Hurkos wrote in his autobiography, *Psychic*, "I am not always right. I have never claimed more than eighty-seven and one-half per cent accuracy in my readings, the percentage established by scientists after performing thousands and thousands of tests with me. With that small margin of error, however, I can tell what has happened to people I meet, or to people at a distance, what is happening and what will happen to them in the future." But there were no scientists—only self-styled "psychical researchers"; and no tests—only performances.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Hurkos made a great reputation as a crime solver. In every major unsolved crime of the period there was a rumor that the police had secretly sought Hurkos' aid. Often a fan would put up Hurkos' fee and with a great deal of publicity he would utter some vague statement. But this method can be pursued only so long, Hurkos was too much in the spotlight, and he was publicly wrong too often. There were mutterings of false arrest suits, and the police, who had always been wary, became downright hostile. Even his devoted admirers became suspicious.

In 1963, Jeane Dixon was discussing Hurkos with Dr. Regis Riesenman, a psychiatrist who dabbles in psychical research. Dr. Riesenman had once brought Hurkos to Washington to solve a grisly child murder, and he is one of the main supporters of Mrs. Dixon. She told Dr. Riesenman that Hurkos was headed for trouble. It was a safe prediction. A few months later Hurkos was arrested for impersonating an FBI agent and for carrying an arsenal of guns. He was later freed, and is today still around, doing what amounts to a vaudeville show on the spiritualist convention circuit.

His place has been usurped by another Dutch crime-solving psychic, Gerard Croiset. Croiset's methods are similar to Hurkos', but he is more careful and polished. Moreover, he stays in Holland most of the time and predictions at a distance are less likely to boomerang on the prophet. A biography of Croiset by Jack Harrison Pollack is receiving wide circulation in paperback. Croiset, who has wild hair and hypnotic eyes, possesses an advantage over the very plain Mrs. Dixon in that he looks like a prophet. Still, in the little world of parapsychology all is not going smoothly for Gerard Croiset. His arrogance has irritated Miss Eileen Garret, the 70-year-old former medium who now heads the influential Parapsychology Foundation and who is recognized as the *grand dame* of ESP.

Behind the stars are a host of lesser prophets, from the storefront Gypsy fortuneteller to people like Chaplain H. Monroe Howard of the Foundation for Universal Truth in Los Angeles, who will answer sealed questions by mail for the nominal fee of $2. There is also a bewildering and constantly shifting array of organizations ranging from the Parapsychology Foundation to the Association for Research and Enlightenment, Inc. The fall conference of the association featured a speech by Mrs. Dixon along with such other attractions as a discussion of Atlantis.

All modern prophets, no matter what their methods, claim in common that they want only to help people and that they have a direct pipe line to God, usually the orthodox Christian God. Mrs. Dixon never hesitates to point out that she is a devout Roman Catholic. She claims to have had her famous vision of Kennedy's death during her morning meditation in St. Matthew's Cathedral. No one today admits, as did the early English seeress Mother Shipton, that he has sold his soul to the devil for the gift of prophecy.

The persistence of the belief in second sight defies all logic and experience. No prophet has ever become rich at the track or in the stock market, although some have made a nice living off those who did want to become rich through those media. The most famous of all stories of prophecy should warn the potential believer as to the nature of the phenomena he is putting his faith (and often his money) into. It is the story of Croesus of Lydia and the Oracle of Delphi. Croesus asked the oracle if he should attack the Persian Empire. The oracle replied that if Croesus did so a great empire would fall. Croesus thereupon attacked, was defeated and lost his empire. He sent a furious message to Delphi, complaining that the oracle had lied to him. The answer, which sounds like the punch line to a poor joke, was: "You didn't ask which empire."

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Writers on Vacation

Roland Barthes

Roland Barthes holds the chair of sociology at the Collège de France; his major work, the Sociologie du Vêtement, *is soon to be published in France. He has also written* On Racine, *a brilliant example of his style and peculiar vision, which was published here by Hill & Wang. The occasion for the piece below was, evidently, one of those picture-stories of writers on vacation which* Le Figaro, *like* The New York Times, *has made an annual event.*—EDITOR

Gide read Bossuet on his way down the Congo. This posture nicely epitomizes the ideal of our writers "on vacation," as photographed in *Le Figaro*: it combines with commonplace leisure the prestige of a vocation nothing can obstruct or degrade. What a scoop—so effective sociologically, so frankly informative about the image of its writers our bourgeoisie prefers.

What apparently astounds and delights this bourgeoisie most is its own broad-mindedness in admitting that writers, too, are people who take vacations. The *vacation* is a recent social fact, one whose mythological development is worth recapitulating. Initially an academic phenomenon, it has become a proletarian, or at least an industrial one. To assert that this phenomenon can henceforth concern writers, that specialists in the human heart are also subject to the canons of contemporary labor, is a way of convincing our bourgeois readers that they are indeed abreast of the times: we pride ourselves on recognizing the necessity of certain commonplaces, we condone these "modern" realities.

Of course this proletarianization of the writer is acknowledged with reluctance, and then only to be destroyed all the more thoroughly afterward. No sooner is he endowed with a social attribute (and a vacation is a highly agreeable one), than the man of letters quickly returns to the empyrean he shares with the professionals of his vocation. And the "naturalness" in which our novelists are presented articulates a sublime contradiction: that of a banal circumstance produced by a materialistic age as against the glamorous status bourgeois society readily grants its intellectuals (providing they leave it unharmed).

Proof of the writer's marvelous singularity is that on this famous vacation, which he fraternally shares with foremen and shopkeepers, he never stops writing, or at least never stops producing. A pseudo-worker, he is also a pseudo-vacationer. He writes his memoirs, corrects his proofs, prepares his next book. And when he does nothing at all he admits the fact as a truly paradoxical sort of behavior, an *avant-garde* exploit only a powerful mind could afford to divulge. We know from this last piece of bravado that it is only "natural" for the writer to write all the time, in any situation. First of all, this converts literary production to a kind of involuntary (hence taboo) secretion, since it escapes human determinisms: to put it more nobly, the writer is the victim of an interior god who gives tongue at all times, without a moment's concern (the tyrant!) for his medium's vacation. Writers may take vacations, but their Muse labors on, and the childbed is endless.

The second advantage of such logorrhea is that by its imperative character it naturally passes for the very essence of the writer. The latter may admit to a human existence, an old house in the country, a pair of shorts, a baby daughter, etc. . . but unlike other workers, who change their essence and, once on the beach, become nothing but summer vacationers, the writer retains his nature as a writer everywhere; send him on vacation and he parades this sign of his humanity; but the god abides—one is a writer as Louis XIV was a king, even on the *chaise percée*. Hence the function of the man of letters is to human labor a little what ambrosia is to bread: a miraculous, eternal substance which condescends to a social form in order to be more clearly apprehended in its fascinating difference. All this leads to the same notion of the writer as superman, a kind of differential being whom society parades in order to play up the factitious singularity it concedes him.

The homely image of "the writer on vacation" is nothing but one of those cunning hoaxes society perpetrates to enthrall its writers more thoroughly: nothing exhibits the singularity of a "vocation" better than to be contradicted—but not denied, far from it!—by the banality of its incarnation: it is an old trick in all hagiographies. Hence we find this notion of a "literary vacation" spreading far and wide—way beyond the summer: the techniques of contemporary journalism are increasingly employed to make the writer an everyday spectacle. But it would be a mistake to interpret this as an attempt at demystification. Quite the contrary. No doubt I find it thrilling, even flattering, simple reader as I am, to participate by this intimacy in the daily life of a race Chosen by the Spirit; no doubt I feel deliciously "in" with humanity when the newspapers tell me this great poet wears blue pajamas and that young novelist prefers "blondes, Camembert and heather honey." Nevertheless, the other half of the bargain is that the writer becomes a little more of a star, withdraws a little farther from this earth to a celestial habitat where his pajamas and his cheese never inhibit his resumption of a noble and demiurgic discourse.

Publicly to supply the writer with a carnal body, to reveal that he enjoys dry martinis and steak tartare, makes the products of his art even more miraculous, of an even more divine essence. The details of his daily life, far from clarifying the nature of his inspiration, merely permit the writer to emphasize, by such confidences, the mythical singularity of his special condition.

For only superhumanity can account for the existence of a being tremendous enough to wear blue pajamas at the very moment that he reveals himself as a universal conscience, or better still prefers Camembert in the same voice with which he announces his forthcoming Phenomenology of the Ego. The spectacular conjunction of such nobility and such futility signifies that we still believe in the contradiction (a totally miraculous one, each of its terms is miraculous too); it would obviously lose all its interest in a world where the writer's task is secularized to the point of seeming as natural as his sumptuary or gustatory functions.

TRANSLATED BY RICHARD HOWARD

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Madison Avenue Medicine Man

AT PLAY IN THE FIELDS OF THE LORD. By Peter Matthiessen. Random House. 373 pp. $5.95.

J. Mitchell Morse

Peter Matthiessen is not a serious novelist, only an earnest one. He has thought long and earnestly about the ultimate human question: Who am I?, and about the penultimate and antepenultimate questions we encounter on the way to it: Who is my neighbor? Where is your brother? Why did you do it? Why did I do it? What must I do? But in order to think seriously about such questions we must have language; and that is what Matthiessen lacks. A writer, as writer, thinks in words or not at all; and Matthiessen's command of them is limited.

He is evidently aware of the techniques by which the best modern novelists derive order, meaning, life, from the chaotic flux and welter of unuttered consciousness and the lifeless conventionality of our most habitual utterance; but he rarely tries to use them, and that is just as well, for when he does try, his clumsy language fails him; most of the time, hoping for the best, he continues in the old ways and does poorly something that nobody does well now because good writers are no longer interested in doing it. The difference between good writing and bad is not a matter of opinion or taste; literary judgment is not analogous to a preference for one kind of ice cream rather than another. The quality of a piece of writing is objectively demonstrable. It is first if perhaps not last a matter of language; and in this respect the standards for the novel are now so high that few novelists meet them. In our time the novel at its best has become a form of poetry —*Comment c'est*, for example, is a poem whose formal perfection and lyric intensity, sustained line by line throughout its length, are one; and if few novelists have anything in any way approaching Beckett's skill, it does not follow that we must be satisfied with inferior work. Moreover, the general level of our competence in language, both as writers and as readers, has fallen so low that there is now a total difference, a difference not only of quality but even of kind, between a few excellent writers and all the rest, and between a relatively tiny group of readers and all the rest.

The unhealthiness of the division can hardly be exaggerated; for in many intelligent people, whose nonliterary intelligence is misrepresented as mere earnestness by their artless fiction, it leads to an unconscious or a half-conscious despair and cynicism with regard to their work and their readers. I think Mr. Matthiessen is one of these. He obviously intended to write a serious novel, but I think he has unconsciously condescended to cheapness.

At Play in the Fields of the Lord is a switch on a missionary phrase, "at work in the fields of the Lord." It is perpetrated by Lewis Moon, a half-breed Cheyenne, who gradually turns out to be the principal character. It sums up his chosen role, his chosen self: a self we see only briefly, in the last chapter and in a short scene preceding Chapter I. Thus the novel circles awkwardly around and doesn't quite succeed in catching its coda.

What happens then between the prebeginning and the end is chiefly melodramatic action, persona-type talk, and exotic nature notes. It happens in and near a Brazilian jungle town. It involves the relations among two fundamentalist missionary families from Moody Bible College, a Catholic missionary from Spain, the local commandant, two soldiers of fortune from the United States, and a tribe of untamed jungle Indians. The tribe is represented by a wise chief and his stupid successor, and by a medicine man whose intuitions are those of Madison Avenue.

The government wants to develop the jungle lands to the east, and therefore the commandant has been ordered to "pacify" the untamed Niaruna Indians who live there. The law forbids him to attack them except in self-defense; however, if a foreign plane on its way elsewhere should bomb and machine-gun the native villages. . . . This is where the soldiers of fortune come in. They own a plane marked "Wolfie & Moon, Inc. Small Wars & Demolition." The commandant is holding the plane, its gas tanks empty, until they pay their back rent in the village hotel, which he owns. He puts the proposition to them in the bluntly subtle manner of the musical-comedy greaser he is; they accept reluctantly, what with their hearts of gold and all. The missionaries are naturally worried about what is going to happen to their prospective clients; the ineffective second fundamentalist tries to dissuade Wolfie & Moon; his chief and the Catholic missionary are silent.

Wolfie is a standard-model beat *picaro*, Jewish variety; Moon is supposed to be more complicated. In a state of permanent nauseous revulsion against the racism of whites and the various ways in which Indians adapt themselves to it, he is looking for some untamed Indians.

Moon as pilot, Wolfie as bombardier, go out to pacify the Niarunas; but Wolfie is unaccountably inept in getting at the bombs; and Moon, subject to no such self-deception, deliberately makes it as difficult as possible for him. An Indian comes into the clearing from which all the others have fled and shoots an arrow at the

J. Mitchell Morse, a professor of English at Pennsylvania State, is the author of The Sympathetic Alien: James Joyce and Catholicism *(New York University Press). He has written for* The Hudson Review, Classical Philology, Comparative Literature *and other magazines.*

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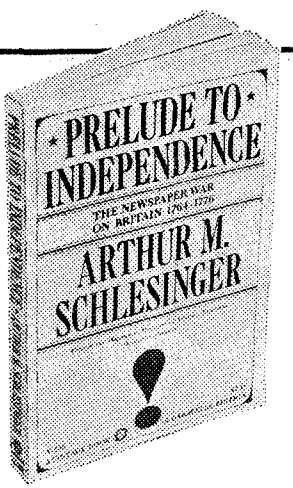

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THE DECADENCE OF JUDAISM IN OUR TIME

By Moshe Menuhin

Destined To Be Praised And Damned But Not Forgotten

"Dear and courageous Truth-teller Menuhin! Your nobly written book has received more than one reading from more than one person. . . . There have been repeated sessions of enjoyment, some of which you may well guess have been by way of renewing memories of old friends who have left the scene, as Albert Einstein, Judah Magnes and Martin Buber, men of great courage, clarity of mind and firmness of determination to bring Jew and Arab into some sort of cooperative harmony."

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"THE DECADENCE OF JUDAISM IN OUR TIME is a forceful report and provides insight into the Zionist mentality. . . . The author presents detailed and damaging evidence. . . . He is affronted by what he regards as jingoism, and indicts the 'military junta of Israel'."

(Edward Wakin in THE SATURDAY REVIEW of June 19, 1965)

"Moshe Menuhin's qualifications for recording his 'spiritual adventures' are remarkable, and one could say, unique. . . . This book is an undisguised, full scale frontal attack with no holds barred on political Zionism. . . . No reader of this book can doubt that the author is in deadly earnest. We can perhaps at least be grateful to him for having included statements which rarely appear in books by Zionists."

(Samuel Landman in THE LONDON JEWISH CHRONICLE of September 24, 1965)

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(Sami Hadawi in THE ARAB WORLD of July, 1965)

"Moshe Menuhin has set down his credo as American and Jew, and he doesn't mind telling us he is proud of being both. What distresses him, however, is to find so much Jewish energy in this country being deflected into alien channels by an 'anachronistic' Zionism which places a narrow nationalism above spiritual Judaism."

(M. Geltman in THE NATIONAL REVIEW, October 19, 1965)

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plane. That does it, as far as Moon is concerned. They convince the commandant that they found the village with great difficulty and will bomb it tomorrow. But during the night Moon steals the plane and the fundamentalists' Niaruna dictionary, and the next morning he parachutes down among the untamed Indians. They receive him as the Rain God, and honor him accordingly. The rest is a tale of tribal politics on the same literary level as the choosing of a new Gand by Tarzan's apes in the Sunday *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and of missionary politics in the same style. The novel ends with Moon's realization that he doesn't belong among wild Indians any more than among tame ones or among white men. On the last page we see him in a state of nature, naked and alone but free and exultant. Then we turn back to that preliminary scene and find him saying goodby to an affectionate whore in a jungle tavern and musing in indirect discourse: "So long as he kept moving he would be all right. For men like himself the ends of the earth had this great allure: that one was never asked about a past or future but could live as freely as an animal, close to the gut, and day by day by day."

There we have it: the prissy impersonal "one," the *Holiday* magazine "allure," Kipling's "the ends of the earth" and the adolescents' "close to the gut," all in the same sentence. Who is this Moon? I don't think the idiomatic chaos of the sentence is intended to reflect the chaos of his soul. I think Matthiessen just doesn't write well. Throughout the book we keep bumping into clumsy sentences such as these: "It had been the confrontation with the padre, he decided, that had set in motion that series of grotesque events," and "Moon had seen a jaguar only once. It was lying on its side on the flat limb of a low hoary tree found along the rivers, camouflaged so demonicly by the deep shade and shifting sun spots that he almost passed beneath it." We keep boggling at metaphors like these: "His eyes were bald with fright," "The sinews of his limbs coiled on the bone," and "Heat. The lunatic ringing of cicadas, like rusty gears of an old universe."

I don't mean that the writing is all bad. Now and then there is a vivid image, such as this: "He crouched in the stern, shrunk up like a wet spider," or this, of an Indian who has just

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been shot: "Aore sprawled sideways in the first clumsiness of his life." There are also some very good psychological observations, such as this, which is good despite the clumsiness of the sentences that carry it: "But Yoyo did not answer, not out of recalcitrance but because he spoke no English; instead he smiled enthusiastically. Though of neither an enthusiastic nor a smiling turn of mind, he had learned early in the game that gringos—and especially the *evangélicos*—responded favorably to eagerness of any kind." But good as the observation is, that last sentence is not one I would willingly read again. Nor is the first. Compare their lurching, stumbling awkwardness with the elegance of the first two sentences in Beckett's *Murphy*: "The sun shone, having no alternative, on the nothing new. Murphy sat out of it, as though he were free, in a mew in West Brompton." Murphy is a more interesting character than Moon because Beckett's prose is better than Matthiessen's. Even the corny dramatic encounters are ultimately due to the cheap language in which Matthiessen thinks. It would be ridiculous to ask whether Moon is Adam or Cain or both, because Matthiessen's prose makes him nothing but a lot of sloppy sentences. In fiction, a failure of technique is a failure of insight.

Trilogy of Discontent

IN THE WORLD. By George P. Elliott. Viking Press. 442 pp. $6.95.

Bernard S. Oldsey

George P. Elliott's third novel, *In the World,* seems to be a 19th-century book about 20th-century America. One of the characters in it says to another, "Now read me the next chapter from *Bleak House*"; and this gentle hint, placed near the conclusion, is enough to remind us that the American scene we've been viewing for some 400 pages is indeed bleak; but it also underscores the fact that we've been reading a book whose loosely arranged elements need a Dickensian knot to hold them together, finally, with some kind of hope.

If it's Dickens at the end, it's Tolstoy from the beginning. *In the World* might very well have begun with, or at least used as epigraph, the famous opening to *Anna Karenina*: "All happy families are alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." Elliott circulates widening cracks of dissolution around the home life of the book's protagonist, Alfred Royce. Although Royce is a philosopher of the law who teaches at Berkeley, a much admired man being considered for a federal judgeship, he is pre-eminently the paterfamilias whose role is almost shattered in our crumbling society. All elements of the novel radiate outward from him and his family—his wife, Beth, who threatens their marriage by zanily jamming their San Jacinto house with inherited furniture; and his three daughters, Lizzie, Sybil and Nancy, who, as intellectualized versions of nubile giddiness, offer themselves up as case studies of modern American mating customs.

In the World is full of discursive ideas and subplots. Among other things, it contains the assassination of two industrialists by a declared anarchist and his partner in crime, a ruined idealist (who after World War II can find no great cause for which to fight and makes this his last quixotic gesture). It uses as leitmotifs the rejection of legalistic power for the sake of the university teaching, the acceptance of crooked TV quiz money as a slide away from moral rectitude, the rejection of property for life among the Pueblo Indians. It poses most of the large, resonant questions of our time—on race relations, labor and management, property, justice, science and religion. But all of these eventually lose ground to the basic domestic issue, as though Elliott grew weary of them, or as though he felt that they were ultimately dependent upon what happens within the home.

We come to understand why some of the questions are jettisoned as we listen to Royce explain a new idea he's got to his friend Horace Skellings, another lawyer who has worked with him on the Labor Relations Board. Royce contends there is nothing left to fight for in respect to social justice. Labor and Management are no longer enemies; they're partners. The labor movement no longer moves; it simply asks for Buicks instead of Fords. Civil Rights is more of the same: the Negro is now assured of his rightful place in American society; but he will get it for the wrong reason—our government's attempt to prove itself before the rest of the world. The Negro will then be integrated into the same bad dream of mass culture. Royce is looking for something more than the material plenty implied by this kind of social justice. He stares off past science in the humanistic regret of lost transcendence. He himself has come, as his Negro son-in-law puts it, "as close as man can get to being wise without God's aid." Perhaps the central and unanswered question of this book is whether this is wise enough.

At least Alfred is wise enough to solve his own domestic problem; and above all the novel turns out to be an analysis of our mating, unmating, and re-mating customs. It should be the marriage counselors' delight. Cases in point: (1) Alfred and Beth (who has had Lizzie by a previous husband) separate and then reunite in the Dickensian finish which comes as a dramatic echo of Auden's line, quoted early in the book, "We must love one another or die." (2) Lizzie marries Joe Thompson, a Negro who passes for white, and their marriage breaks on the rocks of religion and

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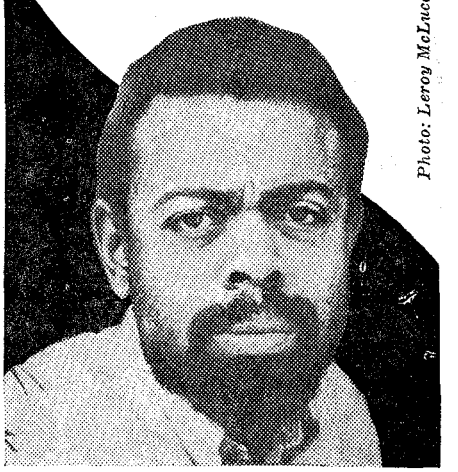

Photo: Leroy McLucas

Bernard S. Oldsey is associate professor of English at Pennsylvania State University. He is the co-author of The Art of William Golding *(Harcourt, Brace & World).*

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money—Joe seeking sanctuary in the cathedrals of Europe; Lizzie in the lay version of a nunnery, living among the Koyola Indians, uncontaminated by the concept of private wealth. (3) Robin Farquhar, pregnant by Leon Kalish (Royce's star pupil and disciple), marries Hugh Hansson, a fairy godfather type, whose will to procreate is as sterile as the glass dwelling in which he and Robin pose as the ideal young marrieds for the Institute of Modern Living. (4) Kalish marries Frenchwoman Chantal Bigonneau to keep her and her son from being deported. Chantal, who had her son by a cousin, now a priest, was originally married to a man who wanted to protect her and the boy; after the death of her husband, she was brought to the United States by Harry Evans, one of the two men convicted of assassination mentioned earlier. Kalish and Chantal intend to get divorced as soon as her citizenship is assured, and he hopes to marry Sybil, the Royces' second daughter. (5) Sybil, however, decides to marry Jim Sorb, brother of the first husband of Kay Ravagli. (6) Kay marries Woody Ravagli when her first husband is killed in the war and Woody's first wife dies of polio. (7) Horace Skellings, an aging playboy, has married five (six?) times; and during the Royces' separation he offers his present wife, Virginia, as a consolation to his friend Alfred. (8, 9, 10, etc.).

Somewhere in Crockett, Mont., Hugh Hansson's father has been divorced and remarried. In Bakersfield, California, Robin Farquhar's oft-loved mother lives estranged from her latest husband—he in the last trailer of the camp they own and run jointly, she in the first. And in New York City, Stan Wriggle and Penny Hardwick, TV quiz manipulators, are divorced from each other but going steady together.

(Such a summary of a novel tends to sound parodistic: at one time the meanest criticism of a Faulkner book was simply a summary of its contents. To some extent Elliott deserves this kind of treatment and this summary was done with the intent of near parody, with, however, the implication that Elliott himself faced the problem of handling a series of American lives containing elements of self-parody.)

One has the feeling that the novel might better have begun around page 192, or at least have been compressed somehow in its entirety, since the overall design of the work is strategically good: from the opening party thrown by the Royces we trace out the patterns of the family and their friends who are present at the party. But the lines in between are often sketchy and mixed, and the style shifts from humdrum to good and back again.

In any survey of the newest groups of American novelists—the so-called "black humorists" (like Hawkes, Heller, Barth), the practitioners of the saintly picaresque (like Bellow, Salinger, Kesey), and the neat utilizers of the mythic overlay (Buechner, Updike, Malamud)—Elliott looks out of place by at least three generations. But this is not to say all is lost. Isn't there still a place and a need for the novel that includes elements of life not caught up in the newspapers and magazines? A novel that does not give up certain living materials to the writers of social science treatises? *In the World* is such a novel. If it lacks the sustained literary impact of Elliott's early and fine short story "Among the Dangs," it has some excellent things in it—especially the set pieces like those in which we visit Robin's mother's place, or the death scenes in Justice Durkeim's house. It is Durkeim, by the way, who establishes the central symbol of life's depth and mystery with a spiral pattern that he works into his rock garden—a pattern that strongly contrasts with the glass house of false domestic bliss set up by the Institute of Modern Living in the atrium of the former Mardon Town House.

The peculiar quality of *In the World* is that, once read, it does not leave you easily. Lacking in clean effect and concentrated force, it has substance and provides numerous shocks of recognition. What can be said finally is that it takes its place—with Elliott's first two novels, *Parktilden Village* and *David Knudsen*—in what might be considered an almost anthropological trilogy of discontent with American society. The author seems to be telling us that this is a society which may not be simply in transition but decay. In either case, he memorializes the events.

Exemplary & Other Baldwins

GOING TO MEET THE MAN. By James Baldwin. The Dial Press. 249 pp. $4.95.

David Littlejohn

There are a number of James Baldwins, who write with varying degrees of honesty, relevance, humility, precision and style. All of them are here: the autobiographizing lyrist, the taut-strung neurotic, the truth teller of the early essays, the celebrity bully. But the shrill and ugly voices, for our purposes, the inflated and fraudulent selves can be as useful as the eloquent and the honest. For James Baldwin is not just another stylish bestseller, not just the latest and most advertised "Negro" writer; least of all is he only a by-product of and publicist for the Civil Rights episode. He is becoming, if he has not already become, our Exemplary Man. One of his distressing liabilities, I grant, is that he *knows* this, knows it too well, that he wears his robes heavily and with swagger. Nevertheless, to understand him may well be, in many and difficult ways, to understand ourselves, and these stories will help.

Going To Meet the Man should not be read first or alone, since many of its effects depend on interreflections back and forth with the earlier works. Some stories borrow the voice and setting of *Go Tell It on the Mountain;* others the jagged, brittle tones, the Manhattan underground world of *Another Country.* Many echo the essays too, once strong ideas with much of their savor gone. And there are tastes as well of the whining, bullying rant of *The Fire Next Time,* the flip self-importance of the Mailer essay or *Nothing Personal.* But all of it counts, even the dispiritingly bad. Much of the excitement of reading this collection, in fact, comes from a reader's constant, hovering balance between reassurance and despair, reassurance at what is so right, despair at what is so wrong. It is one of the most full-blooded, alive and anxious books of the year.

Of the weak, or perverse, or even merely dispensable stories—four out of eight, which is probably not bad—two are appendices to *Go Tell It on the Mountain* of 1952, with the same boy hero, the same family and setting, roughly the same manner and tone. "The Rock Pile" is a tiny étude, austere and slightly touching; "The Out-

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ing"—again young John and his family, on a church picnic up the Hudson River—is much more ardently and vigorously bad. It bears the *idea* of a good story, the skeleton of it: the cracking of adolescent tensions within the setting of a Negro Ship of Fools. It even includes a rich, rocking 8-page tour de force of a Negro shipboard service. But we have come a long way down from *Go Tell It on the Mountain*. There, the passional catharsis, the harrowing of emotions, filial, sexual, religious, were worked through, suffered for, honestly earned and attained. Here they are only tiredly told, unconvincingly claimed and remembered.

But there are worse. "Previous Condition" and "This Morning, This Evening, So Soon"—the latter his *New Yorker* story, his anthology story—represent the worst of the several James Baldwins, the pretentious, near-paranoiac, picked-on Negro, ostentatiously bearing all the sufferings of his race. They recall the worst excesses of *The Fire Next Time*. In both cases, a clue is the total lack of detachment between the author and his heroes, his sniveling, chip-on-the-shoulder narrator heroes. This suffering, self-pitying voice is a sign of James Baldwin's least controlled and least valuable fiction.

It is not easy to be a Negro, a writer, a celebrity and a homosexual in America, and sometimes the strain will show; it is not even easy to be a thinker in America, and this is part of the lesson of Baldwin's weaker work. But at his best, he can move terror and tears, he can do things that need to be done better than anyone else.

"Sonny's Blues" hovers delicately in tone between *Go Tell It on the Mountain* and *Another Country:* it is a small, artless, ambling story, one weak man's memory of his brother. It is the account of his long attempt to understand his brother Sonny, a junkie turned jazz pianist in Harlem, so quietly and uncertainly told that it is almost not a story at all, but just the telling, the trying; a confession that drifts coolly and unhurriedly through digression and reminiscences.

"Come Out of the Wilderness," at the opposite extreme, is a dazzling display of Baldwin's style at its sharpest. Its prose surface has a bristly, electric exactness, its dialogue the bright newness of good talk. Nor is this style mere bravura display; it sparks into life an analysis of mixed emotions, a dramatization of the undercurrents of social intercourse that is diabolically keen. The story, an open and unprejudiced playing through of the *Odi et amo* tensions of an affair, seems a dis-

Exiled

Where will you go? Where now the rooms
once kept ready for you, the old
servants on hand to welcome you,
the garden just as it was when last
you visited, just as it was
as far back as you remember it —
golden the landscape when you stood
there late in the afternoon.

Where is it now, that place where you
belonged so naturally, the formal
growths, the house, the sunset-sights,
the dark turns of corridors, all these
as much alive in you then as they
were real once, summer after summer,
in the country not far from town.
Now they are gone. Thoughts of them

stay on like tatters of a sail.
Memory will pale, and you have no
way now to turn and walk into
the interior you knew so well.
Another storm, one final gust,
your tattered thoughts will be as dust.
To keep alive the glow within
of what was once your ground, your home,
you need the plot, the trees, the stone.

Arthur Gregor

Louis A. Ferman, Joyce L. Kornbluh, and Alan Haber, *Editors*

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The University of Michigan Press
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tillate of all that is best in *Another Country*. It has the same crackling Manhattan setting, the same crouching-cat tension. It has something new and surprising to say about the races. In its Gallic manipulation of human paradoxes, it offers a cool, cruel analysis of the self-deluding stratagems of lovers, a microscopic plotting of our bitchy little hearts.

"The Man Child" is something entirely new for Baldwin, a highly charged lyrical, pastoral tragedy. Tightened, condensed, closed up, "fired" somehow, it would be as full and classic a piece of pain as a D. H. Lawrence story. Four people—a boy, his father, his father's friend, his mother—are frozen in a mythic isolation. Their story grows, the trap tightens, slowly and expansively, through incremental repetitions, incantatory rhythms, the loving simple cadences of a legend.

The title story, finally, deserves its pre-eminence: it is the most important story here. "Going To Meet the Man" is Baldwin's second attempt to imagine sympathetically the mind of a Southern white bigot. I found his picture to be credible, intense and almost hypnotically convincing. It is everything that his first attempt, *Blues for Mister Charlie*, was not.

From a surprising opening in his nuptial bed, we follow the nighttime reverie of a many-ways-frustrated Southern deputy sheriff, a TV newsreel figure come to life. Reflections on his brutal day among the Negroes lead him back, through the device of a remembered song, to where it all began: the pace, the simple river-run structuring are flawless. In a scene worked with exact and almost unbearable crescendo, the reader watches (with the boy Jesse) his first lynch burning, every detail. And as his anticipation turns, with the boy's, to a strange kind of horrified fulfillment, he may find himself forced to admit that there *is* in this barbaric, anti-human rite a genuine primeval satisfaction. Lynchings do really happen, and one comes to understand why.

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Crystallization of Craziness

THE MAN WHO HAD HIS HAIR CUT SHORT. By Johan Daisne. Translated from the Flemish by S. J. Sackett. Horizon Press. 224 pp. $4.95.

Richard Howard

When the language, and consequently the wisdom, of the mad came to be forgotten or ignored in modern Europe —when the king no longer had his fool, when the "Natural" was confined, the lunatic merely derided—it was literature's task to invent the perspective of unreason all over again. For it is always the function of literature to relocate the values displaced when a culture hardens into a civilization. Hence it was precisely when the mad were first shut away, when reason dropped out of the dialogue with unreason (as it had been pursued, say, in *Rameau's Nephew*) that literature began to propose lunacy directly—without the mediation of a form (as form had *contained* Lear) or of an opposing figure (as Sancho had *corrected* the Don). In 1836, Gogol wrote a short story called "The Diary of a Madman" and initiated a genre which was to become as determinative for modern fiction as the tale of supernatural obsession—"The Overcoat we all crawled out from under," Turgenev called it—proved to be for Russian letters in the 19th century. The titles alone suggest the lineage, and the necessity: *Notes from Underground, Confessions of a Fool, Notes of a Madman, Diary of a Mad Old Man. . . .*

The form has become normalized: in a hospital, a rest home or a prison, the madman who is invariably a criminal as well, at least in his own eyes, recounts his terrible deed, the crystallization of his craziness, committing to the language his experiences in the irrational, encouraged and often edited by his keepers. Three of the most admired successes of the day articulate this genre for us: *Lolita, or the Confession of a White Widowed Male*, "edited by John Ray, Jr., Ph.D.", *I'm Not Stiller*, the notebooks of Anatol Ludwig Stiller, "sculptor, husband, lover . . . prisoner, with a Postscript written by the Public Prosecutor"; and most recently *The Tin Drum*, which begins: "Granted, I am an inmate of a mental hospital; my keeper never lets me out of his sight. . . ." These are masterpieces of a period which has discovered — and by these superlative novelists explored — the destructive relations obtaining in the world today between love, law and reason. Curiously, for all their world-wide successes, each of these works has an emblematic, even a historical nationalism about it, an aura of the anthematic—America, Switzerland, the Polish Corridor are often claimed (even by their authors!) to be as much the subjects as the settings of these narratives, and surely there is a local twist of expression, intensified by insanity, which the form urges to an apotheosis: such works are always the product of high linguistic virtuosity, declared to be untranslatable, but eventually, if we are lucky, translated.

We are lucky indeed in the case of *The Man Who Had His Hair Cut Short*, a novel written in 1948—and thus before the other three books I have mentioned, though very much after Gogol, whom the author claims as a precursor—by the world's greatest Belgian author, one Johan Daisne. The degree of our fortune may be calculated by the distance the heart tends to sink upon looking up this author in a handbook of world literature: "Pseud. Herman Thiery, born Ghent 1912. Flemish author. His writing is markedly cerebral, with metaphysical tendencies." Plays, poems, novels, stories, radio and television scripts, literary and film criticism, travel books and reportage — out of this welter

Richard Howard, who has translated many books from the French, has completed his second book of poetry, The Damages. *He is now working on a study of American poetry since 1950, to be published by Horizon.*

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of an incomprehensible idiom (as we have elsewhere plucked, or had plucked for us, a Machado de Assis, a Dagerman, a Dazai), Mr. Sackett, the translator, has come up with a notable achievement, working into English the glutinous, slobbery texture of this novel that has already been translated into French, German, Spanish and Italian. It is a book worthy to stand with *Lolita*, with *I'm Not Stiller* and with *The Tin Drum* as a further inflection of the genre of madness.

Its narrator and hero, Antfield, characterizes himself as a man who has never been able to come to a full stop ("Yes, everything considered," he begins, "there has always been 'something.' "), and as we must expect from this form, the breathless *telling* persists, reflexive and relentless, for a single paragraph of over 200 pages. A failure as a schoolteacher (he replaces his acquaintance, Councillor Brantinck, at the academy where he meets his fatal passion, Fran, who is about 17 when the book opens), as a lawyer ("Once I had the stand to myself, I went to pieces spiritually, so to speak"), as a husband, father and citizen ("In God's name, don't wake up the automaton in yourself, that is the abominable but expensive lesson that my afflicted life has let me teach others; the lesson for which, it may be, I have had to live"), Antfield is certainly a howling success (quite literally) as a lover, and in his preposterous confrontation with the object of his desires "ten years later," he accommodates his murmurous, anthological style to one of the most remarkable revelations of life's quality and character in modern literature. Like Lolita's epiphany, Fran's exposes the corruption of the innocent — the girl had been seduced by Brantinck, who let Antfield substitute for himself at the school in order to avoid scandal—and the true simplicity of the "simple." The risk of the form, as Oskar's drumming has taught us, is that we have no idea whether the terrible events it encompasses have actually occurred or are merely invented by the madman who tells them; we are not certain, at the end, if Antfield has really murdered Fran or even if she has ever existed—the ambiguity of our eventual decision is Daisne's as well. In his inept preface, the translator seems to have no idea why the corpse upon which Antfield watches an autopsy being performed in the afternoon *must* turn out to be the body of his beloved's father as she describes the man's death to Antfield that same evening. . . . Yet only the articulate can be inarticulately expressed, only coincidence can be chaotic: like space, the plots of the insane are curved, and though nothing ever ends, everything comes together.

The quality of this novel, then, is circular: the mind trapped on its obsessive treadmill, the body immured in the maze of romantic love, the social animal committed to the rat race of class hierarchy. The reader must constantly correct his apprehension of events traced early in the book by what he learns later; every instance entails a revision of our understanding, an upheaval in our expectations. In the tale told by an idiot, there are no constants in experience—the virgin *is* a whore, the living body *is* a death —there are only climactic moments, ecstasies and abysses which in the very telling become interchangeable.

Antfield's life is expressed, by him, only in the terms of its affective moments—ten minutes on a platform, as he watches Fran receive her diploma from Brantinck, take him much longer to recount than the ten years before he sees the girl again, ten years that gently swirl down the drain of the *petit bourgeois* Disposall of private life that is as merciless in Belgium as anywhere else. The final encounter with Fran, resulting in a pair of hour-long monologues in a luxury hotel, with Antfield now a ruined, dusty clerk, and the virginal Fran a discredited café singer, wrings the novel to its highest pitch of hysteria, the note of a man who must compulsively rehearse his symptoms until their dramatic enactment releases him:

I have wanted to be complete. Not unnecessarily complete, but as necessarily complete as possible. When everything is done, I must still have the strength to read it over and over, to think of the most suitable names possible for all those who are mentioned in this confession. I do not want my word to be considered untrustworthy any longer by the director, whom I have promised to let bygones be bygones. But it was stronger than I; I believe I have heard a higher command, to write down everything here first, before I do as the director wishes. I think that I must note all this down, so that a few should know how everything really happened.

We recognize the sound of that immediately—it is the circular, burrowing, comical, desperate, exemplary

Affluence

It is deep twilight, my wife
And girls are fixing supper
In the kitchen. I turn out
The reading lamp and rest my eyes.
Outside the window the snow
Has turned deep blue. *Anthony*
***and Cleopatra* after a trying day. I think of**
Those vigorous rachitic
Men and women taking off
Their clothes of lace and velvet
And gold brocade and climbing
Naked into bed together
Lice in their stinking perfumed
Armpits, the bed full of bugs.

Kenneth Rexroth

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voice of our weakness, as we have heard it from Gogol to Nabokov; it is as if, to quote Auden's *Memorial for the City*, the entire genre were under the rubric "let our weakness speak":

This is the flesh we are but never would believe,
The flesh we die but it is death to pity;
This is Adam waiting for His City.

A word about the book's title: Antfield is obsessed with having his head clipped, shaved, shorn of any reminder of his animal self, the fleshly perpetuations of his physical being. His terror of the body of this death is literally presented in the autopsy scene, one of the most deliciously gruesome in all literature (ranking with the famous eels-and-horsehead setpiece in *The Tin Drum*), and emblematically pursued throughout the book, especially in the ablutionary ritual by which Antfield prepares for his final confrontation with Fran. But rigorously justified, on intellectual grounds, though every impulse of theme and structure may be discovered to be in this harrowing, hilarious book, there is further an immediate justice rendered to the physical world by Daisne's talent as a writer, a response to felt life for which I am even more grateful—a justice that rescues this author, immediately, from the dreadful categories of "cerebral" and "Flemish metaphysician" as arbitrated by the handbooks of literature, and restores him to the even more banal, but inevitable, categories of "central" and "accurate." His book is about the way we live now, whether we have long hair, short, or through no fault of our own, as we imagine, none at all.

Angelica Balabanoff: 1878-1965

Therese Pol

With the death in Rome on November 25 of Angelica Balabanoff, First Secretary of the Third International, one of the last links with Russia's revolutionary leaders is gone. By the time I met her, her political career was all but over: she had dissociated herself from the Soviets in 1923 because she refused to compromise her vision of socialism. But there remained Angelica Balabanoff the woman—gracious, generous, spirited, highly intelligent, capable of strong moral indignation—and while her political influence evaporated, her vital personality did not.

My first interview with her—in 1942, when I was working for the German-language weekly *Aufbau*—started under rather unpromising circumstances, but over the years this contact developed into a close friendship. Mme. Balabanoff was then staying at the Park Plaza, near Central Park in the West 70s, a kind of Grand Hotel for impoverished literati. On its musty-genteel premises lived almost every writer of consequence from Central Europe, excepting Thomas Mann. Like its tenants, the hotel had seen better days. The elevator was frequently out of order and Mme. Balabanoff remarked to me once: "I sometimes stand there pushing the button, and nothing happens. After a while I forget what I came out for in the first place, and then I go away again. It happens to all of us here."

But on that first encounter I found Mme. Balabanoff nearly unapproachable. She kept saying, "Why don't you read my book?" (I had—*My Life as a Rebel*, published by Harper in 1938) and, "Any factory girl is more interesting than I am. Why don't you interview one of them?"

I then took her attitude as a rather calculated flirtation with her former eminence; later I discovered that she was genuinely modest. Still, for the purposes of an interview I was getting nowhere, so I told her point blank, "Madame, *I* am the working girl, and *you* are preventing me from doing my job."

That made perfect sense to her and broke the ice. "I did ask you to come up here," she conceded, "and now I might as well give you some tea."

It was the first of innumerable cups of tea together, sometimes spiked with rum. Wherever she went—and she traveled over most of the civilized world—Mme. Balabanoff never separated from her samovar. She prepared many good dinners, with piroshki and other Russian delicacies. I would sit and listen to her talk until late into the night, and I learned of her hates and loves.

Her hatred of communism and Communists amounted to an obsession. This tiny dark-eyed, mild-mannered woman would turn into a regular virago at the mere mention of Stalin's name. "Lenin betrayed the Revolution," she cried, "and that terrible man Stalin is burying what's left of it. Promise me never to trust a Stalinist!"

To make absolutely sure she wasn't mistakenly consorting with Communists, Mme. Balabanoff would ask me abruptly every time we met, "Are you a Communist?"

This was an extremely farfetched idea, but I always gave her the same answer—I was not, never had been, and never would be a Communist—until I finally convinced her. After that she started worrying about my husband. "I hear he is a Communist," she said. I assured her that this was completely untrue and that, in fact, the German Communists had practically guaranteed to hang him once they got hold of him.

"That's good," she said, leaving wide open exactly what was good about it.

Despite her inveterate hatred, Mme. Balabanoff never denounced foreigners suspected of Communist affiliations. She could have caused a great deal of trouble, since her word carried weight, but she would not stoop to any form of betrayal, not even for a "good cause." Her single most remarkable trait was her total integrity, which is why she was bound to fail in the game of power politics.

Our many talks took place in the pleasant atmosphere of her various homes. She eventually moved to an apartment on West End Avenue, a fourth-floor walk-up where she dragged her groceries up the stairs, out of breath, resting on every step. Still, she had enough energy left for articles and speaking engagements, running errands for ailing friends, raising money for others when she herself didn't have a dime, and devoting herself to her favorites among *émigrés*—the Italian Socialists.

Mme. Balabanoff was fluent in five languages—Russian, German, French, English and Italian — and curiously enough she spoke all of them, even Russian, with a faint foreign accent. Our meetings invariably ended in a reading of her multilingual poems, one of which was called "Tears." This extraordinary woman, who had accompanied Lenin to the Finland Station, who had tried to change the world by her stubborn pursuit of pure socialism, permitted herself the one vanity of composing sentimental verse.

Therese Pol is a magazine editor and translator.

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I never had the heart to tell her that I didn't care greatly for her poems and disliked being read to. Besides, no poem in world literature—including "Tears" — could stand up under so much recitation. Yet her pleasure in these harmless sound effects was disarming and as important to her as her love of mankind.

From the beginning I sensed that the whole subject of Mussolini, whom she met when she was a student in Switzerland in 1912, was taboo. Their intimate friendship ended in an implacable personal and political enmity, and she could not even bring herself to mention his name. I was all the more surprised when, in the spring of 1945, she volunteered to tell me how she learned the most important news of her life.

Mme. Balabanoff was in the habit of visiting a certain friend—"as an act of charity." This was a woman in her dotage, given to incoherent mutterings. One afternoon the old lady was in her usual state of mental confusion, rambling. In Mme. Balabanoff's own words:

She kept repeating the same words over and over, "Mussolini is dead . . . Mussolini is dead . . . " in a dreadful monotone. I told her not to fret, I humored her, I tried to divert her, I turned off the radio, thinking the noise bothered her. That whole day my poor friend was going from bad to worse—hopelessly out of touch. Eventually I went home, but I had trouble getting into my apartment—I'd misplaced my key. I had to wake the super, and that took a while. By the time I was inside I was too exhausted to listen to the radio, as I usually do, and dropped into bed.

At four in the morning the phone started ringing—it was the first reporter who asked for my comment on Mussolini's death. I was absolutely stunned. He told me, very nicely, I must be the only person in America who didn't know Mussolini had been killed, and wasn't it the height of irony?

So here I was, with my crazy old friend who hadn't had a lucid moment in years, trying to tell me something I'd been waiting for all my adult life—the death of Mussolini.

Angelica Balabanoff, the last great liberal and humanist of her generation, outlived her worst enemy by twenty years. She went to live in Italy, a country she loved beyond all others. In one of her rare emotional moments she told me, "I would walk to Italy if only they would let me." She spent her last years in peace, in her chosen homeland.

THEATRE

Harold Clurman

THE DEVILS
SKYSCRAPER
MAN OF LA MANCHA
YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU

In Act III of John Whiting's *The Devils*, Grandier, the soon to be officially tortured priest who is the play's central figure, asks the Jailer to treat him with pity. "Look, this is your system," the Jailer answers. "Just be thankful that you can get men to do the job. Don't ask that they should be humane as well."

That is a pithy speech. Scattered here and there in the text there are others. But the play as a whole, eminently earnest and strenuously sincere, makes little dramatic sense. Based on Aldous Huxley's novel about the Vicar of St. Peter's Church in Loudun (France) during the 17th century, *The Devils* concerns lust and faith, politics and superstition, ignorance, clerical cruelty and redemption. The play is impassioned without being articulate.

Grandier is a sophisticated man of God prodded by carnal desire. His learning, wit, pride and success with women arouses the venomous envy of the middle classes, the vindictive suspicion of the priesthood, the animosity of the crowd with the exception only of the lowly Sewerman and a devout bishop. Though depicted as a true son of the Church, Grandier may be called a premature Voltairian. He regards his sexual appetite as guilt in respect of his vocation but a gift of God in respect of his person, a curse and a blessing, possibly even a justification of faith. Because he is handsome and has a reputation for virility, his very name and a momentary sight of him inspire the Prioress of a nearby convent with an obsession about him.

With the connivance of the state authorities, which seek to destroy Grandier because of his opposition to their policies, fanatic hysteria is bred first in the Prioress, possessed both by her sexual urge and the wish to avenge herself on the man who has provoked it, and then in the other sisters of the convent. All the women are accused of being in Satan's clutches. The Prioress is physically desexed by the community priesthood, a ritual which is followed by the inquisitorial martyrdom of Grandier. Though he is innocent of any contact with the Prioress, he is guilty of both fornication and the abandonment of a woman he professed to love and whom he has made pregnant.

What is Whiting after in this maze of motives? The play purports to picture the plight of man. We are doomed by political pressures, by mass ignorance, the ugly repression of our natural impulses, the corruption and cruelty of ecclesiastic institutions. But in the end Whiting arrives at an affirmation of life expressed in the muddled mysticism of such speeches as "We live a little while, and in that while we sin. We go to Him as we can. All is forgiven"; to which the antiphonal response is "So there is meaning after all. I am a sinful man. And I can be accepted. It is not nothing, going to nothing. It is a human creature going to love."

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nothing determined. Nothing, that is, beyond a smear of themes prayerfully mixed from political, psychoanalytic, existential and pseudoreligious sources, all of them concluding, due to a lack of artistic and intellectual coherence, in fervid banality. At a time and in a place where hardly anyone comprehends the drift and nature of our disarray this may easily be mistaken for profundity.

If the play is an indigestible mess, its production, directed by Michael Cacoyannis, is blasphemously bad. The essential requirement in such a piece is to create the feeling of an environment in which the possibility of the satanic presence in a human being is admitted as real. The production we see is as close to this as the Broadway theatre is to the Cathedral of Chartres. The spirit that obtains is the devotionalism of Shubert Alley. The result is "comedy." The audience patronizes the play's characters; it complacently mocks the credulity of past ages.

Several of the actors playing minor parts are as effective as they possibly can be in the circumstances. But Jason Robards' Grandier wears his cloth dispiritedly. Besides being miscast, he appears not only unconvinced but embarrassed by his role. Anne Bancroft of the beautiful eyes and expressive countenance seems driven to her wild outbursts by sheer actor's (or director's) will, rather than by inherent need. No wonder: she is surrounded by nothing but lumber.

After *The Devils*, to date the season's most elaborate offering of our serious theatre, one is almost eager to return to the frivolous. *Skyscraper*, a musical by Peter Stone, Sammy Cahn and James Van Heusen, is very agreeably animated by Michael Kidd's *moujik* energy, coupled as it is with the salt of local wit. We are also treated to some good showman gimmicks and jokes, and to the charm of Julie Harris' disarmingly innocent dedication to everything she does. I heard some people complain—oh the purists we have in our audiences!—that *Skyscraper* is not true to Elmer Rice's *Dream Girl*, the play on which it is based. As if that mattered.

The stage of the ANTA Washington Square Theatre (where the Repertory Theater of Lincoln Center was once housed) is craftily used by Howard Bay's setting of *Man of La Mancha*, a new "Musical Play" by Dale Wasserman, Mitch Leigh and Joe Darion. The pattern of Cervantes' story of *Don Quixote* is so irreducibly touching that it works here as it does in almost every telling.

It is helped in this instance by Richard Kiley's appearance and by his commitment to the symbolic idealism of the part, as well as to its sure-fire stage pathos. In addition, there is a supporting cast of similarly committed actors, several of whom are endowed with unusual singing voices. More persuasive, perhaps, than any of these elements is the sentiment of enthusiastically old-fashioned "theatre" with which Albert Marre has informed the production. Though all this left me, case-hardened as I am by the season's rigors, indifferent for a while, it ended by my acknowledging to myself that the show was Sweet Corn—and thus not to be rejected.

I am glad that the APA Repertory Company under the aegis of the Phoenix Theatre has an unqualified success in its revival of Moss Hart and George Kaufman's *You Can't Take It With You* at the Lyceum. The APA has previously offered us revivals of such plays as *Man and Superman, Right You Are, The Lower Depths, Scapin.* It is an organization that merits support.

As to the play itself, everyone seems to remember (and rejoice in the memory of) its 1936 production in greater detail than I do. Though I probably laughed then along with the rest at its whacky pleasantries laid on and put together with the expertness typical of its famed team of authors, I may also have been a little cool to it as a piece of facile evasion in the midst of the depression. While it may then have served as still another form of relief at a time when all forms of relief were gratefully accepted, the play strikes me today as much more "timely."

We are at present exactly nowhere. I know, I know: there is war in Vietnam, there are protest marches and countermarches, there are Communists in China and mayhem in Mississippi, etc. etc., but our New York theatre audiences are fixed in what strikes me as an immovable spiritual *status quo* in which wars and rumors of war serve only as a hollow echo fitfully disturbing their prolonged sleep.

Thus *You Can't Take It With You*, which tells us in glib good nature not to worry too much about making packs of money or about the nonsense of paying the income tax or working at jobs we don't care anything about, is essentially a fairy tale. As such it suggests to our stupor the injunction, "Do What Thou Wouldst" or, quite bluntly, "Enjoy!"—which nowadays may be a liberating, even a revolutionary, slogan! In any case, it is all good clean fun. At times we are shoved and beaten into risibility; then too the show contains some really darling hocus-pocus and such lines as "Mama took up writing plays when someone left a typewriter here by mistake."

The APA Company does this by now American "classic" play better than anything I have seen them do before. The company's mood and mental composition is one of youthful good will. Ellis Rabb's direction is right in every respect. The actors play with a relaxation which is not simply technical but a consequence of the honorable course they have pursued in the theatre. So everyone—even those not appropriately cast—is wholly engaging. And Rosemary Harris, though she must watch her weight, is delicious in what formerly seemed little better than a conventional ingénue role. Miss Harris brings to the part the right touch of comic awareness together with warm womanly canniness. (Only the dancer Anna Laekersen of the Royal Danish Ballet at the New York State Theatre gave me as much pleasure in recent weeks. Her face reflects a composite of perpetual tearfulness with discarnate ecstasy, while her feet seem to tickle the earth with tender playfulness.)

You Can't Take It With You is the best show of the season—alas!

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